

INDUSTRIALNATION

Issue 17

Patrick Codenys of
Front 242's new project
Male or Female

Rhy Fulber of
Conjure One

Assemblage 23

Covenant

Alec Empire
of Atari Teenage Riot

Hocico

Psyche

Noisex

Suicide Commando

DJ Acucrack - Biotek - Kompressor - Massiv in Mensch - Informatik
Somatic Responses - Corvin Dalek - Aiboforcen - Severed Heads

\$3.95 US \$5.50 CAN



NEW AND UPCOMING RELEASES



STROMKERN (SK:) rE-aLign



The Re-align EP is the second single and first stand alone EP from Stromkern's critically acclaimed Armageddon release. (WTR 010). This North American only EP contains three new remixes of the title track, including renditions by Seabound and cut.rate.box and new remixes of "Perfect Sunrise" (La Floa Maldita), "Armageddon" (Infrastructure), "No Release" (Battery Cage) and "Terrorist" (Haujobb). To kick things up another notch, the band has also added their own interpretation of the Gang of Four classic Anthrax. Overall this is a solid release that will leave fans, new and old, screaming for more.



cut.rate.box dataseed

The North American release and most recent offering from the duo known as cut rate box. Musically, dataseed can be described as an amalgamation of powerful beats, mind warping programming and intellectually driven lyrics. Dataseed also features a guest appearance from Victoria Lloyd (HMB and Claire Voyant) on the track "Enigma" and the US version features new artwork, conceived and designed, by the members of cut.rate.box. This version also features exclusive new mixes from Stromkern and DJ Tony Estrada as well and an alternate version of "This Ice" called "Thin Air" in addition to the Assemblage23 remix of "Zionsank." This release is a progression to another dimension.



trigger10d

The Difference is a Boy

After months of manipulation and fine tuning, Trigger10d is set to unleash their signature sound to the world with their debut offering, The Difference is a Boy. An eclectic mix of trip hop, noise, darkwave, pop and trance, their sound and style can be compared to no other. Passionate female vocals and deep lyrical content embraces the soul while the intricate and intelligent programming intensifies the overall vibe. An absolutely stellar debut!



bebörn betón *Tales From Another World*

The first domestic release from this legendary synthpop trio. Exclusive to North America, this 2xCD set serves as a brief retrospective of the bands extensive 13 year history on disc 1 and provides a glimpse of the future with 8 new remixes on disc 2. Hear why Beborn Beton is considered one of the true pioneers.



STATE OF THE UNION BLACK CITY LIGHTS

Fusing an intelligent mix of Electro, Techno, Trance and Synthpop with hard pounding beats and emotional lyrics, State of the Union set out to defy all boundaries on their debut Black City Lights. This release only scratches the surface of what this band has to offer.

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Assemblage 23 frontman and former Industrialnation writer Tom Shear reunites with IN to talk about his new record.



Alec Empire

Atari Teenage Riot and Digital Hardcore Records ringleader Alec Empire proves to us, once again, why he's so fucking cool.



Aiboforcen

Seba Dolimont, Side Line magazine head honcho and Aiboforcen founder, informs us about his new record.



Noisex

Raoul Rotation talks about Groupieshock, his new album, and his decision to limit touring in order to focus on studio work.



Conjure One

Ex-Front Line Assemblyman Rhys Fulber talks with us about life without Bill and his new project Conjure One.



Kompressor

Frontman Andreas K lays out his plans for world domination and tells us exactly why Kompressor does not dance.



Hocico

Mexican EBM terrorists Hocico spread the hate and energy and tell us just what exactly Hocico means in Spanish.



Informatik

"Da5id Din talks with Industrialnation about his pervy new Informatik release and future touring plans.



Biotek

Jonathan Sharp endeavors to keep EBM evil in with his latest Bio-Tek offering.



Male or Female

Patrick Codenys of Front 242 discusses Male or Female, his new project with 242's Daniel B and Dead Man Ray's Elko Blijweert.



Somatic Responses

Welsh brothers John and Paul Healy swear to us they aren't really serial killers, despite the evil music they make.



Covenant

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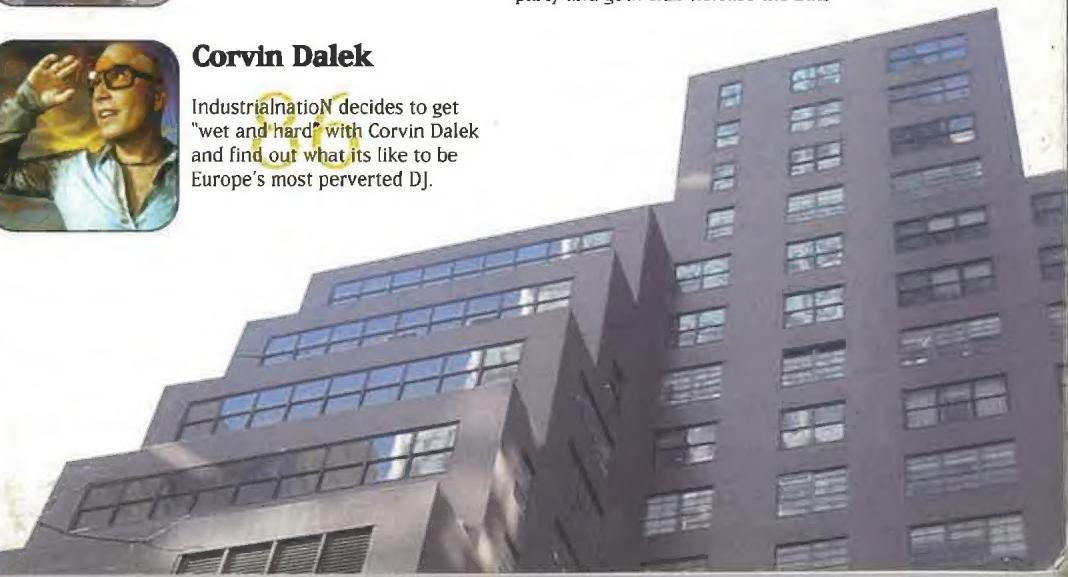
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hello

I like living and I like to have money

by working in 'INDUSTRIAL' I lost nearly \$60,000 in five years

take some good advice, give up!

it's not worth it mate, life is bigger and better.

see ya

x

"Don't blame me, I'm just the messenger
I don't know what the message means
Don't blame me, I'm just the messenger
I'm just the messenger don't blame me"
Cruxshadows — "Binary"

Dear IN,

My name is Frank Stanley. I desperately need a subscription to your magazine, every other fucking magazine sucks, please, please, please. I sent you guys a letter because I couldn't get you online so if you would please send me a subscription you would save my life. Please help me!

Frank Stanley,
Cambria, CA.

"It's so quiet I can hear My thoughts touching
every second I spent Waiting for you
Circumstances afford me No second chance
To tell you How much I've missed you."
VNV Nation — "Beloved"

Greetings IN,

I see that you have moved once again. I sent a letter off to your Pleasant Hill address and it was returned by the Post Office. What, do you have three ex-wives in hot pursuit?

The last issue I have of Industrialnation is number 16. Actually, it is the only issue I have. In any case, please inform if you are still publishing IN, what issue you may be up to now, and the price of the current issue. I have enclosed a S.A.S.E to facilitate your reply. Thanks.

Cordially,
Harold L. Lesser
Selden NY

"Contentment overfed with feigned luxury. We
didn't recognize the screen. A troublesome
smile overshadows the brightened sky."
Haujobb — "The Cage Complex"

Greetings IN,

I just received your note regarding the expected publication of issue 17 in December. It's good to hear that you are still alive and persevering in the face of adversity, and that you have at long last found an address where the populace is willing to let you hang around for awhile. Yeah, guess Oakland would be it. From what I've read, people there will put up with just about anyone: Hell's Angels, MS 13, etc.



I'm reading
your mail
now!

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SPEED TRIBE



5 free Speed Tribe or
Male or Female DVDs
each month!

Dance.com is giving away 5 free Speed Tribe or Male or Female DVDs each month from January to June, 2003. Both DVD/CD albums feature Daniel B. and Patrick Codenys of Front 242 in amazing surround sound, and are released on the new Dance.com label.

This contest is courtesy of Dance.com and Industrialnation.
To enter, go to:

www.industrialnation.com/freeDVD

<http://www.IndustrialnatioN.com>

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"I am naked
I have nothing left
My bones are picked clean
And riddled with regrets
Nothing can touch me
I've nothing left to take
For I am naked
But I can never break"
Assemblage 23 — "Naked"

I think ex-IN contributor Tom Shear sums up everything right there. So many things have happened since the last issue came out close to four years ago!

Ever since we started to express interest in reviving the community that is Industrialnation, we have been overwhelmed with an overall surge of enthusiasm and from contributors, readers, bands, labels, almost everyone we've been in contact with. This has been extremely refreshing to me personally.

Alright story time. Not long after the release of issue #16 of IN, we were beginning preparation for issue #17, collecting reviews, setting up interviews, and living life in sunny California. Like life changed for so many on September 11, 2001, Life changed drastically that late May for me as well. Geri, the girl I was dating/living with, and I were in the midst of moving apartments. As with every move, there is so much up in the air and so much stress to deal with at times like these. Well, I had left early in the morning to move boxes to the new place, and Geri had stayed behind to pack more boxes. I returned to the old apartment to find nothing new packed. Having been gone for 4 hours I found this extremely odd, and Geri was nowhere to be found. After sitting around a couple of hours, cleaning and packing the rest of the things, wondering where Geri had run off to (she was prone to little sporadic adventures), 2 policemen knocked at the door. They gently informed me that Geri had called

911 earlier that day and subsequently passed away of a fatal Asthma attack. The part I neglected to mention here is that Geri had always had a rather severe case of Asthma, and we had spent many late nights in the hospital together with her on a respirator. However, never did I think she could have befallen such a fate at such a young age.

To make matters worse, at the same time, another key person involved in the magazine was in the hospital waiting for his/her significant other to get out of a surgery room.

It has taken a while for me to confront with the demons in my head, but I look forward, knowing that life is short and meant to be lived, and sitting around rotting it away is such a waste.

I personally have so much enthusiasm when it comes to getting Industrialnation back on track and providing the underground music community with the best un-biased coverage we can offer.

Being a complete DIY person, the all volunteer-base has always made it challenging, but seriously, if we didn't have the incredible contributors and people willing to go that extra mile, Industrialnation wouldn't be what it is today.

Industrialnation magazine is, as it always has been, a definitive independent guide to the underground electronic music scene. We will continue to grow, expand, and broaden our musical palette into new realms of music the masses deem "underground." At the same time, covering the music that put us on the map. We have decided to release 2 issues a year. Expect to see Issue #18 mid 2003.

I look forward with a rejuvenated outlook for a bright future, Cory Hart and me driving around with our sunglasses at night.

Vig @ IN, editor

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EDITORIAL

Assemblage 23



By Theresa DeLucci

Photo : Jerry Bennett

A clean slate is meant to be filled, and Tom Shear, the amicable man (and former Industrialnation writer) behind one of America's premiere electro acts, Assemblage 23, is about to become very busy. Again.

The hard work began with Assemblage 23's debut album *Contempt*, which, shortly after its release in 2000, began systematically tearing up dance floors across the country with the pounding singles "Surface," "Purgatory," and the aptly-titled "Anthem." US and international tours followed, as well as guest spots on anthologies and appearances remixing songs by such artists as Claire Voyant, Kevorkian Death Cycle, Flesh Field, and Pain Station. Assemblage 23's sopho-

more effort in 2001, the acclaimed *Failure* album, demonstrated the evolution in Shear's musical composition skill and range, as well as showcased Shear's ability to pen emotional, searing lyrics (most notably about his father's death on the track "Disappoint"). Among other accolades, *Failure* won two Synthcon Awards for Best U.S. Album and Best U.S. Single (for "Disappoint").

Fresh from the studio recording the *Defiance*, follow-up album to *Failure*, and back from headlining the successful Synthpop Goes The World festival, the perennially busy Shear was kind enough to discuss the future of Assemblage 23 with Industrialnation.

IN: Firstly - Congratulations on your Synthcon awards.

Tom Shear: Thanks!

IN: What sparked the move from Gashed! Records to Metropolis?

TS: They weren't serious about running a label that was going to go somewhere. I never asked to leave, though. I told them I wanted my next full-length to

be on a label with better resources, but that they could keep the back catalogue and release the maxi single and remix album which I was working on at the time. Instead, Eric (the guy that ran Gashed) freaked out, told me I had to give him nearly \$9,000 within 2 weeks or he'd sell me off to whoever he wanted to. Very mature. I got my lawyer involved at this point, and it became a big ugly mess. Finally he just sold my rights to Metropolis, which is what he should've done in the first place.

no means an experimental album, I used some more experimental elements this time around. One track starts out with a rhythm built out of a sample of the noisy audio outputs of a modified Game Boy. There is a LOT of Reaktor on this used mainly for twisting samples up and chopping up beats. As for evolution... I don't know. I hope I get closer and closer to the ideal I am hearing in my head with each release.

IN: Is this part of what the title *Defiance* refers to?

TS: That's not really what I had in mind, but that certainly works well!

IN: *Contempt* was really well-received - any sophomore jitters while working on *Failure*?

TS: Like you wouldn't believe. I think I drove everyone around me nuts the whole time I was working on it because I was completely neurotic about whether it was going to turn out alright or if I was going to get slammed by the sophomore jinx.

IN: Was it easier to work on your third album, getting past the second album? Did you feel less pressure during the making of *Defiance*?

TS: No, if anything I actually felt more pressure. *Failure* was so well-received that I knew expectations would be high for *Defiance*, but above that even, I am just really demanding of myself. I am most definitely my own harshest critic.

IN: Do you follow your reviews?

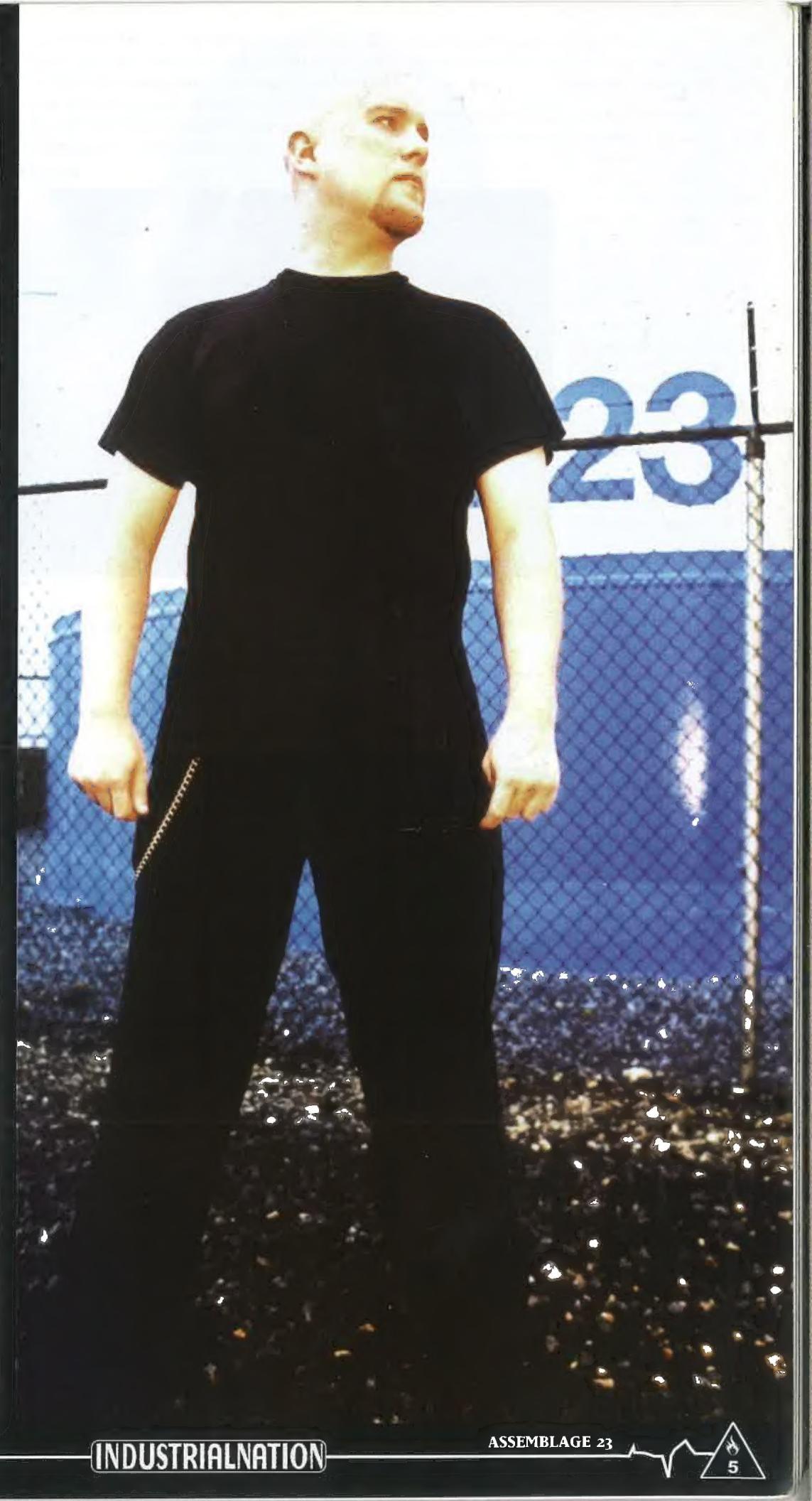
TS: When I come across one, I'll read it, but I don't go looking to track them down. It's good to get a general feel for what people think of your work, but opinions vary so widely that they really don't hold too much meaning for me. Whether someone likes what I am doing or not, I'd still be doing the same thing.

IN: *Failure* seems to be deeply personal, even more so than *Contempt*. It really runs through a wide range of emotions - anger and fear, grief and forgiveness. Was it difficult to write this album?

TS: Quite the opposite, actually. Music for me is a lot like therapy. It helps me sort of exorcise any demons I might have, and get through difficult times. So although a lot of the topics are rather dark, it is very gratifying to be able to write about it and, in a sense, get it behind me.

IN: How did you feel after you finished making *Failure*? It sounds like someone getting rid of some very powerful demons and maybe sharing some words of wisdom.

TS: I had worked so intensely for a couple months on the album that by the time I was finished, I really didn't know what to think of it. I didn't play it for anyone except my girlfriend until it was done, so I really hadn't gotten any outside feedback. I was certainly relieved to be finished with it though.



IN: Were you afraid that the album's dedication to the memory of your father would influence the way people interpreted the songs?

TS: Not really because the dedication was a personal thing more for myself and my family than anything else. But I also hope, although it may sound corny, that if people understood the origins of some of the tracks, that it might help them get through a similar situation. I've already received a lot of very nice letters from people who have had a relative or friend commit suicide and who said the songs meant a lot to them. I think that's sort of a nice tribute to my dad. Having something nice come out of something so horrible.

IN: How was *Failure* different to compose musically?

TS: It was a little different in that I switched over to using a software sequencer and audio package, so I had a lot more flexibility and was also a lot more efficient.

IN: How did you put together the *Addendum EP*, namely deciding which songs weren't right for *Failure*?

TS: The new tracks were songs that I had in mind while I was working on *Failure*. I actually write a lot of music in my head when I am away from the studio, so these were ideas I was carrying around at that time and just wasn't sure if they would fit the flow of the album as a whole.

IN: You've done lots of remixes - what do you find exciting about them?

TS: It's challenging, but in a really fun way. I think it also gives me a chance to be a bit more relaxed musically and do things that I might not do traditionally within Assemblage 23. It's just a lot of fun.

IN: Is there anyone in particular you'd like to work with next? Anybody you'd be curious to hear remixing Assemblage 23?

TS: Oh, I don't know... I'm sending out a lot of stuff to be remixed right now, so a lot of the people I was interested in hearing remixes from will be doing them... Daniel Myer, for one.

IN: What about producing? What have your experiences been like?

TS: I have to honestly say that I don't think I'll produce other bands again. It turned out to be a lot more difficult than I was expecting it to be, and it's hard at times to have the attention span you need to spend 12 hours a day working on something when it's not your own music. I don't know... I suppose I

TS: Angelo Badalamenti. I loved the Dust Brothers score for *Fight Club*. Howard Shore does some interesting stuff. Whoever it was who did the soundtrack to *The Mothman Prophecies* did a phenomenal job, too.

IN: What movies would you like to have written the score for?

TS: Man, that's tough... *Pi* maybe. I thought that was a real mediocre one that could've been so much better.

IN: I have to ask this! I see you thank Ralph Wiggum on your liner notes. He's my favorite Simpsons character - was that an inside joke or are you just one of those fans that watches the Simpsons every time it's on?

TS: I am completely obsessed with the Simpsons. I'm the type of person that, even if I've seen an episode 20 times, I will watch it whenever it comes on. At 6:30 every day, everything just STOPS. Got to get my fix!

IN: What's coming up in the future of Assemblage 23? Are you planning any down-time, or going right into lots of show dates?

TS: We're going to do some more US dates to round out the end of this year, then we're planning on a 6-week tour of Europe in January!

IN: So, was having your equipment stolen the worst thing to happen to you while on tour?

TS: Actually, the worst part was almost getting mugged in San Francisco. We wandered into a part of town we really shouldn't have been in, and a rather large group of these cracked out guys tried to start trouble... that could've been really bad.

IN: What have been some recent good experiences on tour?

TS: The best was the same day our stuff was stolen in Seattle, we were determined to still play the show... and when we did so, SO many people came out to give support... it was really heart-warming.

IN: Thanks so much for taking the time to do this - anything else you want people to know about Assemblage 23?

TS: I just want to thank everyone who has supported us, as well as thanking you for the interview!

should never say never, but for right now, I don't think I'll be producing anything other than my own material.

IN: What are you listening to now?

TS: I've been going back and listening to a lot of

Photo: Sam Atakra



Photo: Sam Atakra



early electronic music lately...Tangerine Dream, Jean Michel Jarre, Vangelis... that sort of stuff.

IN: You did the score for the movie *The Good Thief*. Have you always been interested in doing something like that?

TS: Yeah, I think for the long haul it's a direction I'd really like to explore more of... the music public is very fickle, but film composing is something you can do for quite a long time.

IN: Who are your favorite film composers?

PROJEKT

etherreal gothic & darkAmbient



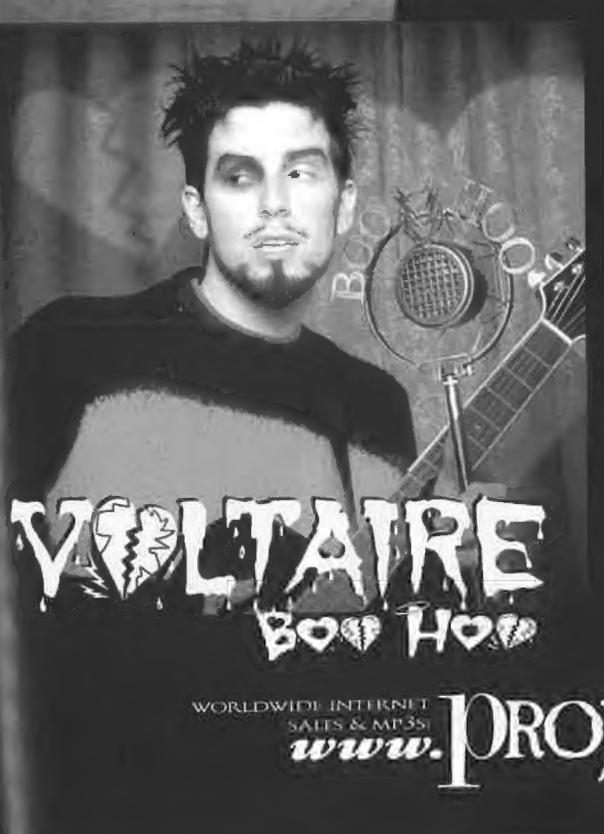
*black tape for a blue girl
the scavenger bride*

PROJEKT: Gothic

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Mors Syphilitica, Lycia, Audra
and many more favorites...



Defiance was released October 2002 on Metropolis Records.

Visit Assemblage 23's official website at:

www.assemblage23.com

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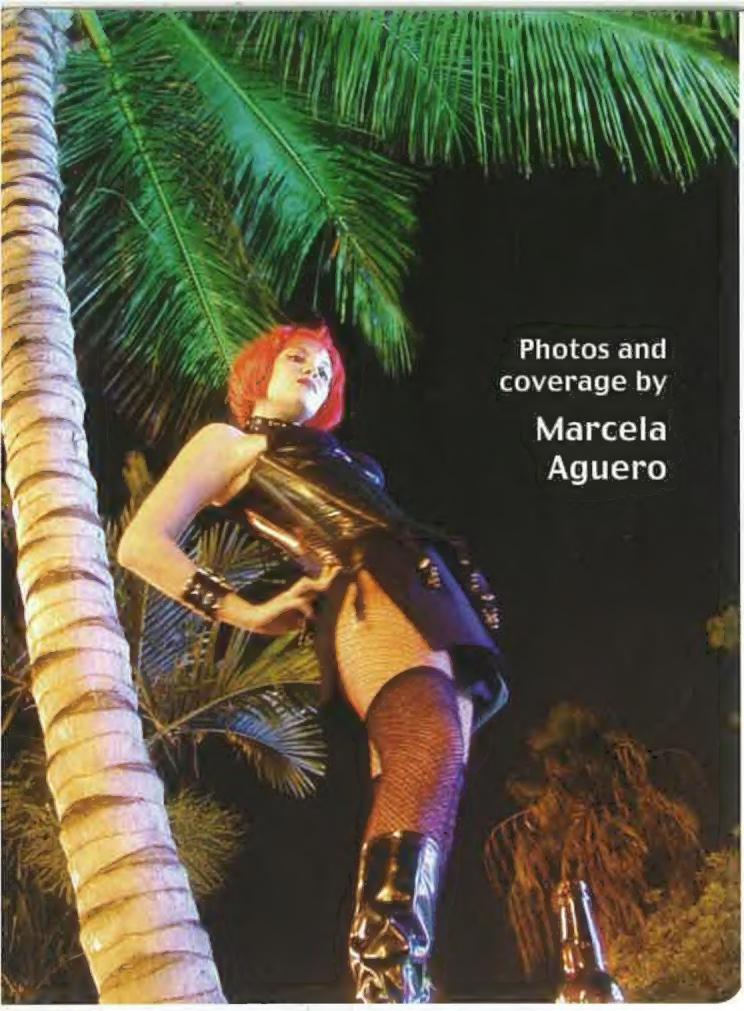
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Photos and coverage by
Marcela Aguero

SCENE SPOT

South Florida (eastside)

SCENE SPOT

local shows around. Underland Privat is the brainchild of electronic band DPX and was once a stable venue in the heart of Miami.

Club SOHO has opened up a new 3 room event on Saturdays called Voltaire, and is located in the design district.

On South Beach there is endless entertainment of all genres, events, and great shops, but the most industrial thing you'll find there is Uncle Sam's Music Store (also located in Lauderhill, Broward). If you are going to be music-hunting while in S. Florida, you will certainly want to pay them a visit.

Promoter and DJ Sin who carries on the tradition of DJ Danny Bled and club Manray has his own version of "sin" nights at club O'Zone. Sin boasts it's playlists of all the hits you want to hear and is hosted in a pleasant atmosphere every Wednesday night (request your songs online: www.djsin.com).

Creativity thrives in this non-metropolitan area where everything is not conveniently located within walking distance. Extra effort is necessary to make even entertainment happen. Perhaps this is why South Florida is the birthing ground for great inventiveness, ambition, and some of the most original efforts by many to put on some great events. The following is an attempt to briefly cover the goings-on of the industrial nightlife, in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties with prior apologies to any (of the many) who may be left out.

We start in Dade County, bienvenidos a Miami! A now defunct club but still thriving traveling gig called Underland Privat is supplying the Miami region with one-time events and, as always, bringing together some of S. FL's most talented musicians for some of the best

Above: Clubgoers and DJs from all three counties pictured at Respectable's, The Venus Room, and South Beach

If you're looking for a hardcore, depth-filled evening of dancing to a less-popular blend of amazing music while in Miami, then certainly seek out the ageless Kitchen club! (a club so underground, most Floridians don't even know where to find it). If you're lucky they'll have a good night in store for you somewhere. The Kitchen Club's owner Aldo (aka DJ 16-bit) deserves notoriety for always remaining passionate about, and seeking out great music. And though the club has suffered many relocations, they're still going strong (industrial style) since 1988, and can easily compare to, or surpass, the likes of more popular clubs such as NYC's Downtime. 16-bit and DJ Carlos Menendez are currently hosting their night at club 5922, best to check for updates at thekitchenclub.org. Also in Miami is Mass, another event held at various venues which has just recently celebrated its 1 year anniversary on September 1st. It is hopefully here to stay, and with its enormous attendance, shows the promise of sticking around at

Moving northward into Broward County we have what has been the sole consistent provider of industrial-related entertainment for the area over the past year. The Venus Room, a one bar room with an outside patio (where you can enjoy the S. FL rain in front of a beautiful everglades landscape mural?!), is home to two prominent figures of the current industrial community of Broward. Resident DJ Falstaff, who hosts electronicpulse.net, spins Fridays and Saturdays while Joseph of www.abusementparkent.com provides variety, promotion, and special events on Fridays. Most other outlets in Broward are one-night events held at various locations. Promoters such as Joseph of Abusement park productions often take over these venues to bring on special events such as the "strange but beautiful" series, and "the funeral" parties which are held at the Saint once a month. The Saint on SR84 is also host to an array of fetish parties such as the one brought to you by Jayme's Wildwear.

Which leads us now to what one might think is an un-related topic.

You may have to research a little to find an outlet for your particular taste in clubs in Broward, but if you're into the fetish scene, you shouldn't have any problems at all finding something to do here. In fact, it seems this county has confused or fused the term "industrial club" into meaning "fetish night." Near the Fall of 1998, in the midsts of an underground lull (what? there was a lull?) all the club staples had suddenly gone defunct, or became lame by most accounts. Though this has nothing to do with industrial or goth, there were many specialty "parties" such as fetish parties struggling to occur and, in particular, one by a clothing boutique called the Fetish Factory. Like others (such as the Fetish Box and Gregore's Rubber Room & Eroticville Theater at Squeeze) they hosted an occasional fetish-party, very much in the footsteps of London's "The Torture Garden" in the hopes of generating business for their unique shop. They found themselves at club Manray, home to "Sin," the hippest thing happening at the time, though in desperate need of a little spicing up. As fate would have it, the dress-code only events appealed to the outlet-hungry goth/industrial undergrounders, allowing the now-coined Alter-ego parties to suddenly reach a new plateau. This is vaguely where the cross-over occurred. The freaks came out from all over, some to enjoy the mixture of drum & bass, industrial, and gothic provided by DJs such as Mr. Mendez, then later long-time underground DJ Danny Bled, some to take advantage of the costume dress code (to comfortably be themselves) some to people watch, and all others to live out their perverted fantasies on the toys provided throughout the club. Though originally having very little to do with the industrial culture, the Alter Ego parties should certainly be credited for having quite an impact on our scene and on others as well. Things may never be the same around these parts (i.e., you will never be able to walk into any underground club here without having to see some latex-clad kids in the corner

least for now (their info at www.masssite.net).

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Which leads us now to what one might think is an un-related topic.

Upwards and onward we move into Palm Beach County which seems an entity all it's own. Respectable's is still (after 14 years!) host to the industrial underground. It is most notable for the variety of live shows it offers, from local to well-known artists in many genres. Respectable's is located at Okeechobee Blvd in West Palm Beach, almost at the heart of the world renown glitzy shopping area for the filthy rich. For shopping however, you may want to check out Euro-tique for rubberwear, corsets, and boots. And, if you're into vintage, one of the most unique places to visit in Palm Beach is Le Sepulchre, a large store in Lakeworth catering to the underground tastes of goths and punks alike!

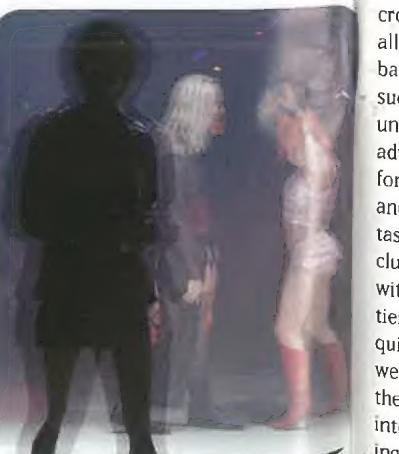
As far as musical acts are concerned,

well that would be a book unto its own to cover. Not only has industrial music merged with so many styles over the past decade (such as rock, rap, techno, and mainstream) it has veered into many new directions that its modern definition is not as clear as in the past. Industrial music fans and musicians may disagree on what in today's world of computer generated music can be considered industrial or not. But there is something for the veterans of all tastes in S. Florida. I'd guess that every 5 out of 10 clubgoers is a musician of some sort. For the most part the electronic musicians of South Florida (who are many indeed) are home-based solo recording artists or collaborators who don't seek live performances. There are definitely your share of industrial bands who do play live shows though. To name a few are: Deadstar Assembly, DPX, Fainting in Coils, the Necrophiles, and Gods and Monsters, who can currently be seen often on our local stages, such as the Factory (Ft. Lauderdale), the Culture Room (Ft. Lauderdale), Freez (Ft. Lauderdale), Ovation (Delray), and Respectable's (West Palm). To hear some of the music generating from the darkside of sunny Florida you can go online to a page such as:

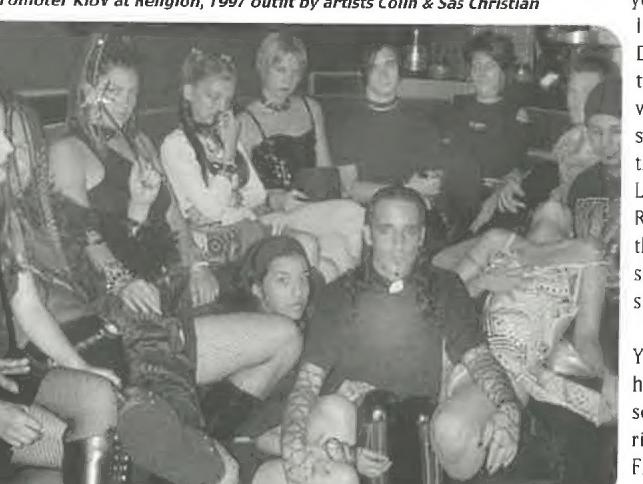
www.mp3.com/stations/shovel

You may be pleasantly surprised at what you hear! You may also be surprised to learn that some of your own favorite bands are based right here, or started up here in South Florida.

Immortal2002



Former members of Pod, Paul of X-Vortex, enigma Eric, and Fade of Still Life Decay



Joseph (abusementpartENT) and clan at UpScene in Riverwalk, Ft. Lauderdale

SCENE SPOT - SOUTH FLORIDA

INDUSTRIALNATION

9

SCENE SPOT

Australia

By j. citizen

Background Trivia

While Australia is about the same size as mainland U.S. (minus Alaska) it has a population of only 20 million people. That's because most of Australia is arid scrub and desert - the "outback." There are only 5 cities with populations over 1 million and about 10 towns with populations over 100,000, (by the way, the capital city is Canberra, not Sydney, despite what so many in the US insist). The larger cities are all very far apart. The closest are about a 12-hour drive from each other.

In other words, touring as a band and trying to establish a following, especially whilst doing non-mainstream music, is daunting. In fact, many just throw their hands up in the air and don't bother. Some move overseas (eg. JG Thirlwell [Foetus], Nick Cave & the Birthday Party). Others remain and try to make the most of it. Mind you, it's not all that bad, each city has strong music and arts scenes, it's just a long long way to the other cities. Australian artists can only fantasize about what it must be like for artists in Europe or parts of the U.S. who can just jump in a van and, within a several-hour drive, there are numerous large cities and tens of millions of people.

Nonetheless, the great spaces within Australia, the lack of people, and the isolation from the rest of the world all yield many benefits overall.

The Early Days of Industrial

From Sydney, SPK are credited with kick-starting industrial music in Australia (and worldwide alongside acts like **Throbbing Gristle**) in the late 1970s with a series of vinyl 7 inches with photocopied sleeves. The SPK project evolved from harsh screechy industrial-punk, through abstract noisescapes, EBM, gothic-industrial, ambient, and lastly, horrid top 40 dance-pop. Early live shows featured banging metal percussion, the band dressed in strange suits of armor, projected footage rang-



New Project



EYE



TDM

When you think of countries that are closely identified with industrial music, Australia probably doesn't spring to your mind. However, Australian artists and technicians actually played a leading role in the foundation of industrial and electronic music in the 1970s and 1980s. SPK, Foetus (JG Thirlwell) and Severed Heads are probably the best known of these early artists. As for equipment, it might surprise you to discover that the first digital sampler, the Fairlight CMI, was created in Sydney.

This article contains a brief history of Australian industrial as well as a report on the current rivet-head scene here: artists, labels, zines, clubs, radio, and related websites.

To kick things off though, here is some trivia that reveals the challenges placed on Australian artists and labels by geographic isolation and a small local population.

The Late 1980s and Early 1990s

Unfortunately, the fat-cat pop of the mid- to late-1980s swept all this industrial goodness aside. Consequently, popular awareness of Australia's industrial music diminished greatly.

The best-known industrial project of the late 80s was NO. Their music sounds a bit like Alien Sex Fiend with the voice of Ollie Olsen (the granddaddy of Australian electronic music) howling a range of politically-inspired lyrics over the top.

A few years later, in 1992, Snog appeared with their hit "Corporate Slave." But it took quite a while for many of us to realize they were from Melbourne (Australia). Why? Because they were released on a German label, with no indication of their heritage. In fact, for quite a while, Snog could only be bought in Australia via import!

Music Industry Support - Not Much

This highlights another major problem for Australian artists. The Australian music industry is reluctant to invest and support local projects overall, let alone those who are even just a little bit quirky. It's much cheaper to flood the market with imported US and UK megastars that have already been developed with foreign money. This is also the case in other arts.

On the other hand, Australian artists have a relatively hard time gaining recognition overseas due to geographic isolation. Touring overseas involves large sums of money that could be better used for sensible investments such as buying a house.

Nevertheless, there are in fact many artists releasing great industrial music at present. There are also several small labels.

Contemporary Artists and Bands:

As space allows me to discuss only a handful of the many contemporary artists, I'll first mention the Primary website at <http://primary.edv.com.au/>. It's the best resource database on Australian artists making industrial, darkwave, gothic, and related genres.

David Thrussel's Snog and Black Lung are the best known projects. Occasionally, he even takes them on a tour to the 3 or 4 major cities I'm assuming you probably already know a fair bit about these projects, so I shan't dwell on them here.

A recent ground-breaker is Sydney band Jerk. They're on the metal-industrial side of the fence and were co-founded by Lamar Lowder, who was in the original line-up of Powerman 5000. Because of their heavy-riffing-guitars and full-guitar-band set-up (alongside crunchy electronic beats and synths) Jerk's

music is very accessible to the large metal audience. They play live a lot and have recently signed to a major label. See www.jerkmusic.com

One of the best known of Australia's do-it-yourself projects is Canberra's EYE. Since the early 1990s they've released music on cassette, CD, video, CDR and over 40 international compilation CDs. They've evolved from harsh industrial cyberpunk through theatre-soundtrack-noisecapes to incorporate influences such as punk, drum & bass, digital hardcore, and hip-hop over an industrial EBM base. Recent recordings feature the female vocals of DvaDg, originally from the U.S. Continuing an Australian and industrial tradition, EYE's music is very political and topical - often much more explicit, informative, and humorous than most such acts. They receive a lot of airplay on community radio stations around the country. See www.eyenoise.com. EYE's electro-tech-d&b side-project, ELF, is also quite well-known, playing live regularly. See www.elfmusic.com

System Corrupt - www.systemcorrupt.com

From Sydney, this collective-label brings together some of the most exciting industrial breakcore power noise and mega-distorted splatter techno around. Their scene is totally independent of the goth-industrial club scene and can most often be caught at free parties in obscure locations.

Bloody Fist - www.bloodyfist.com.au

Based in the industrial-port city of Newcastle, this label has been going strong for almost 10 years, releasing a large range of vinyl industrial breakcore and hardcore gabber techno destruction. The founder, Mark N, DJs frequently along the east coast,

Also in Melbourne, this label mainly releases ambient, moody electronic, cinematic-type projects such as Shinjuku Thief.

Cranial Fracture Recordings - www.fracture.ar.com.au In Sydney, brand-spanking new with a debut double CD. Cranial Fracture focuses on noise, dark ambient, and darkwave music.

INDUSTRIAL RADIO:

The most significant radio station in Australia for alternative music is the Government's nation-wide youth station, JJJ. However, generally, it is "alternative radio" which plays major-label releases. Thus, for nearly all Australian and overseas industrial artists, airplay on JJJ isn't very likely. The exceptions are those artists who have enough guitars and "testosterone" to get on the heavy metal show. JJJ only very rarely plays Snog, for instance.

Nevertheless, we thankfully have hundreds of Community Radio Stations across Australia. These are staffed by volunteers and are generally very supportive of truly alternative music and viewpoints. In some of the big cities community stations out-rate the Government's JJJ. There are, however, only about ten community radio shows around Australia which specifically focus on industrial-related music. These range in scope from those who play mostly industrial-gothic-dance to those which play experimental-industrial-avant-garde. You can find a link-list of their websites at www.teknet.net.au/eye/links/radio/

Industrial Night Clubs

For those into what would term "true" industrial (ie. noisier experimentalism), the most exciting industrial events are those which are completely independent of the club scene - events most often hosted by the aforementioned System Corrupt and Bloody Fist labels. Expect lots of ear-blistering distortion, music you've never heard before (or mutated in new ways), disturbing video footage, general intensity with lots of friendly people. Don't expect to see any club-scene-goths there!

As for the club scene in Australia, as in most countries, industrial is intertwined with the gothic scene. The hybridization of the music and aesthetic of these club genres has reached such a point here (and I suspect worldwide) that many people on the scene are confused as to which contemporary music is industrial and which is gothic. Maybe it's neither. The music referred to, to my mind, is predominantly club-techno with a variety of influences from new romantic, and less dominantly, industrial, EBM, and gothic, or it is post-glam-metal with an industrial-goth aesthetic.

Apart from that, what can you expect to find at the clubs here? Some clubs focus on DJs and filling the dancefloor with the predictable hits. Other clubs, however, are much more adventurous and a lot more fun. They include regular bands and performance art pieces. Some even shun gothic music altogether and focus on past and contemporary flavors of "industrial."

How do the clubs here compare with those overseas? Well, my only experience with overseas clubs are some in Newark and San Diego. To me, the people dressed and otherwise looked pretty much the same as I would expect to find in an Australian club. But with the exception that, in place of a few African-Americans there, here you'll find a few Asian-Australians. The music was pretty much the same, apart from a few differences in regards to a track here and there by locally-known, but internationally unknown artists.

If you're planning a trip to Australia, the best web-site to consult about clubs is www.gothic.net.au/cityscene/ for a city by city breakdown and calendar of what's on. But for something more special and more industrial, I'd contact some of the aforementioned labels to find out if any events are coming up.

Industrial Zines

Whilst there was a flood of Australian industrial zines in the mid-90s, there haven't been any for a long time. Blatant Propaganda released several zines in the late 90s with reviews of mostly self-released artists. However, the paper zine has retired to the www.blatantpropaganda.com website.

A new face on the horizon is "Gothic Nation." I'm confused as to why they've given the zine that genre name, when most of the artists interviewed and reviewed are more industrial than gothic. It seems the editors are catering to modern youth's (aforementioned) confusion as to what music best fits under what pigeonhole. You can contact this zine via the GUP record label (website above).

There you go. A run-down of industrial music in Australia.



Club "Dominion" in Perth



Club "Dominion" in Perth

mainly at noisier-dance events - the noises he churns out blow all traditional industrial-goth-club DJs off the floor and back into the 1980s. Like System Corrupt, the events organized by Bloody Fist are much closer to true industrial such as SPK, Throbbing Gristle, NON etc. than what you get in sceny clubs (which seem like retro clubs for old folk in comparison).

Embryo Recordings - www.embryorecordings.com

In Melbourne, this label ranges from the ambient drones of Solar to the abstract glitch-beat of TSS and the industrial-docm-metal-noise drones of Halo (who recently signed to Relapse Records and toured the U.S.).

Dorobo Records - <http://home.mira.net/dorobo/>

Noisex. It equals noise plus sex.

Despite the obvious pun, the fusion of noise and sex is the real driving force behind this powernoise outfit. Noise and sex make the world go 'round, so to speak. From the syncopated rhythm of driving, inorganic beats to the distorted percussion of a body's most intimate acts, these two forces propel the body to move, make the body get up and enjoy itself.

Noisex released its first tapes in 1992. Since then, Raoul Rotation (as Noisex) has released six full-length CDs and 2 EPs (one of which is available only in a special boxset). Noisex has brought its own blend of noisy electronics and powerful rhythms to many a concert — including large European festivals and two US tours. After playing at one of Europe's larger festivals this year (InFest), Raoul Rotation has decided that the touring needs to stop, that studio work

needs more attention.

IN: What has influenced the decision to stop performing live? Will there still be US shows in 2003?

RR: I've tried to reduce doing shows for about 5 years — it didn't work. Most of my free time I was on tour and, besides, I had to produce my albums. I recognized that I definitely need more time for the studio work.

My decision was to stop live shows in order to have more time in the studio. It is still hard to stop but I'll be back in the US in 2003 because of the cancellation this year. It wasn't anybody's fault!

IN: What do you do for holiday to decompress from the musical pursuits?

RR: I haven't had holidays for ages! No time to relax (another reason to stop [touring and doing live shows]).

IN: Some people would think that a life of touring



By: Brian Clarkson

Industrialnation got to chat with Raoul (thanks to the wonders of the Internet) after his appearance at InFest to discuss the project, the strains of touring, and all sorts of things.

around the world would be the perfect life. Why would you want to sacrifice that to go back into the studio and work in what some would think is a static environment?

RR: is great but don't forget all the stress and pressure. And you have to take the time to work in the studio to make it happen! Actually, I have my own interpretation of quality and if there isn't enough time to reach it — I'm just dissatisfied with the result! Basically I'm doing music for my own! Maybe, if I'm satisfied again — I'll be back! Who knows!

IN: Is there anything specific about touring that you don't like?

RR: NO!

IN: Are there parts of touring and doing live shows that you think you'll miss?



RR: YES! (meeting interesting people)

IN: What do you think could be done to fix it?

IN: What gives you the drive and inspiration to produce, and to continue producing, music?

RR: That's my life! I'm inspired by everything all time! The power I'm taking of my fans!!!!!!

IN: Some of your musical influences (Esplendor Geometrico, Throbbing Gristle, etc.) could be considered somewhat obscure. How did you find that music early on?

RR: At the age of 10, I started learning piano at music school. After 5 years, I was bored and I entered the alternative scene. I was so amazed by the experimental-noise music and I bought my first synth (a KORG DS 8) and started making experiments with sounds.

IN: How did you enter the 'alternative scene'? How did you find it? What was your first introduction to it?

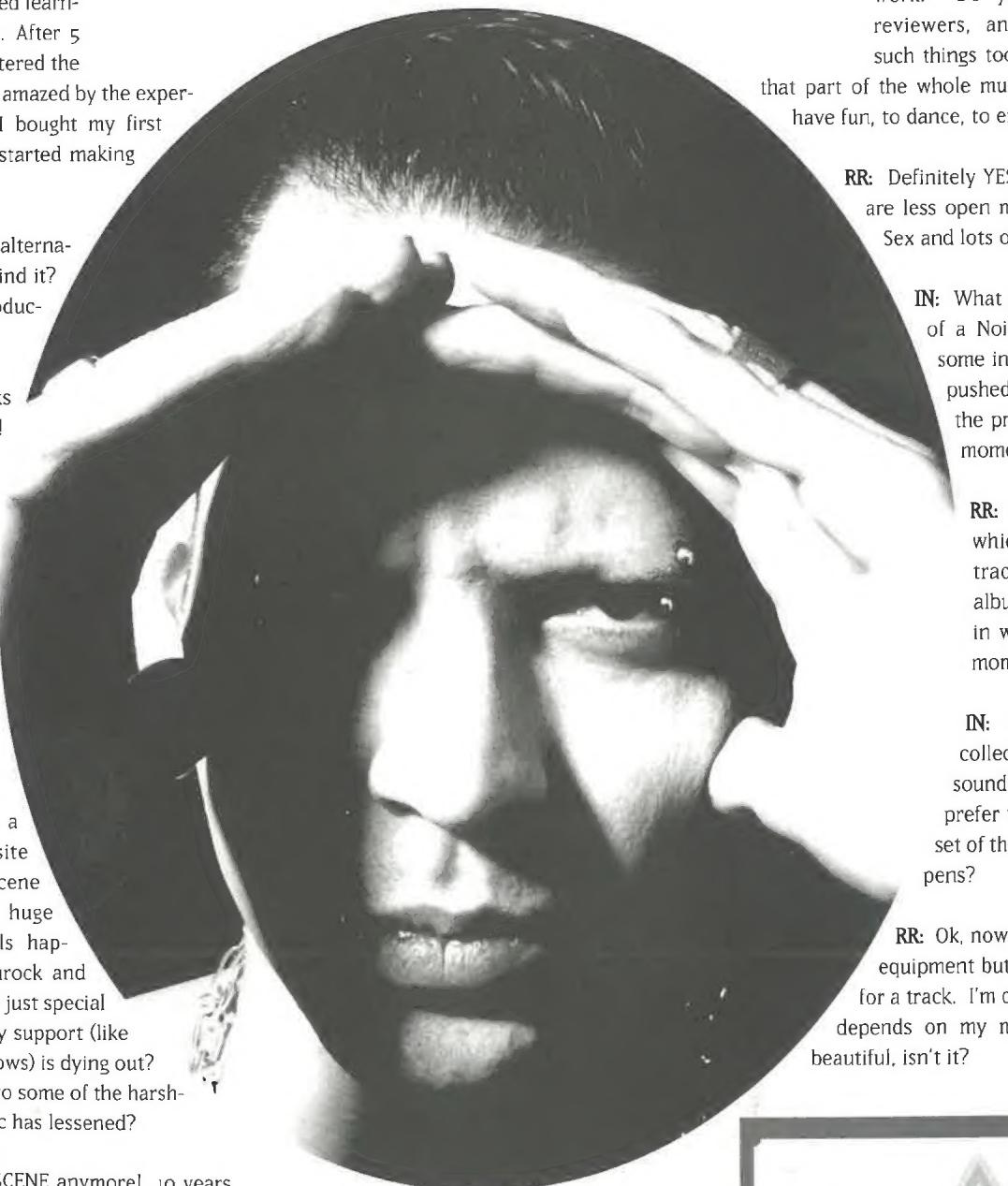
RR: I just met some freaks which introduced me to it! I was really impressed by that bizarre culture.

IN: How do you think the early piano training you had has influenced or helped the music you do now?

RR: Not in practice but for the feeling.

IN: I remember seeing a comment on the website about there being no scene left, but I also see huge electro/industrial festivals happening in Europe (like Eurock and Maschinenfest). Are these just special events, and the day-to-day support (like club nights and regular shows) is dying out? Or is it that the reception to some of the harsher side of 'industrial' music has lessened?

RR: I meant NO ACTIVE-SCENE anymore! 10 years ago ... you can't compare it to now. The result is, there are huge festivals which are interesting for the scene. For example: when I came into the scene, as a fan I booked bands by myself to see them playing live. Believe me, these events were the best to me!



IN: Is Noisex a full-time project for you, or is there a day job that you do as well?

RR: Noisex is a real full time job for me (24 hrs). But,

in general, I'm doing, with my father, an art gallery and a digital art print-studio (www.art-active.de). Altogether This takes all my time plus having SEX!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

IN: Is *Groupieshock* another conceptual album, like the book ideas of *Over and Out*?

RR: No, *Groupieshock* is mostly FUN! No concept behind except to say I'm stopping live shows! Hahaha!

IN: There is a lot of humor (wordplay, the condom insert) in your work. Do you think that fans, reviewers, and interviewers take such things too seriously and forget that part of the whole musical experience is to have fun, to dance, to enjoy oneself?

RR: Definitely YES! Even most of them are less open minded. Life is Noise, Sex and lots of FUN!!!

IN: What goes into the creation of a Noisex album? Is there some initial concept that gets pushed to completion, or is the process just spur of the moment?

RR: Right, it is the process which builds a Noisex track and finally an album! It always depends in which mood I'm at the moment!

IN: Do you have a large collection of equipment and sound samples, or do you prefer to work with a smaller set of things and see what happens?

RR: Ok, now, I have collected some equipment but I'm using smaller sets for a track. I'm changing sometimes. It depends on my mood as well! Less is beautiful, isn't it?

For more information on Raoul Rotation & Noisex, access the official website at:

www.noisex.net

<http://www.industrialnation.com>

IN BYTEZ

pneumatic detach

By Kyronfive

IN Bytez is a new section for Industrialnation. Here, we will introduce readers to bands on the market with one record out poised and ready to make an impression on the unsuspecting masses. IN Bytez is an opportunity to meet the bands which will become ones to watch. Tune in now and be that annoying person overheard shouting 'I knew about this band a year ago' when the heard of recently elated-in clubbers stampedes the dancefloor.

Call it powernoise, hardcore, or electronic experimental music: In-your-face, hammering, noise-fueled beat-bests having been rising in popularity in the industrial masses since, well, Throbbing Gristle, but more recently with the inception European labels such as Ant-Zen or Hands. Standing in opposition to this mostly Euro-based movement is a recent crop of US-based noise artists. Utilizing less-Teutonic, more varied beat structures and styles than your average Europowernoiser, US bands such as Antigen Shift, Navicon Torture Technologies, and, of course, Pneumatic Detach have developed a sound that has put them firmly on the Global Noise map. Based in Boston, Pneumatic Detach's Justin Brink has been successful enough to sell out the runs of both of his demos and his first record (released on Frozen Empire Media) in only a short period of time. With a split release with Antigen Shift and a remix CD on the way, Pneumatic Detach is poised to make a lot of noise in the US industrial scene.

IN: Tell us a little bit about who comprises Pneumatic Detach and how it came about.

Brink: Pneumatic Detach in the studio is myself (Justin Brink). Live, I like to work with various people to keep things new and to work off of different people's energy. As far as how Pneumatic Detach came about, I started creating music 8 or 9 years ago. I went through a long evolution process until I came up with the sound I was looking for. Some of my original songs may have sounded much like something off of Brap. My first show ever was opening for SMP in an art gallery in Boston.

IN: How would you describe your sound to someone who's never heard of you?

Brink: I would probably say: industrial/electronic/noisy beat-oriented song structure.

IN: According to your website, your demos and your first release (on Frozen Empire Media) is sold out. How can people get a hold of your music? Any plans for upcoming releases?

Brink: Correct, if someone is looking for one of the actual releases from Frozen Empire Media I am afraid they are all gone. Even myself, I have only one copy that I am afraid of losing. But I am trying to get the CD re-released to have something out there for people before the next few releases.

IN: One thing that makes Pneumatic Detach stand out from other bands of the same ilk is that you seem to use organic-sounding instruments. Is that intentional?

Brink: Absolutely, there is something about getting a drum machine and trying to tweak the patches so they sound cool of different that just does not work for me. In all music it is like a recipe, the better ingredients you start with the better the final product should be / sound. In my opinion, you need to create something from scratch otherwise someone can walk into a music store play a demo song on some keyboard and hear the same thing. Most of my tricks lie in using my Nord Lead, MS2000, Virus, JP8000 trying to create unusual frequencies and sampling various sections at a high bit rate and use those for my kicks, rhythms, grooves, breaks, etc. Also gathering various sounds from where ever to chop them up and use for whatever.

IN: Powernoise (for lack of a better term, call the genre 'people who make noisy music you can dance to', if you like) has gotten a lot of attention in the US, but mostly through labels such as Ant-Zen and Hands. US bred and born Powernoise (for lack of a better term) seems to be upstaged by our European counterparts. Do you see a powernoise/experimental/noisy-dancy stuff/etc revolution happening in America?

Brink: Sure I would definitely say there is a burst of interest in the so called genre. Most IDM artists aren't doing much that is that ground breaking. But there are a few that stand out. People want something new sounding that they can groove to at the same time. I think most 'Pownoise' handles that pretty well.

IN: I know you played a festival in Rhode Island earlier this year. Any plans to tour?



pneumatic detach

Brink: I would love to but the right situation needs to present itself. Time off from work, etc. Who knows, maybe if I am lucky I will get fired from my job, flip out, pack all my shit in a van and go.

IN: You reference several different genres on *Par Es Ses* – the aforementioned powernoise (for lack of a better term), drum & bass, dark ambient, etc. Do you like the flexibility of whatever happens to strike your mood? Ever plan to do a side-project devoted to one specific style?

Brink: Yes, I want to do something different, mixing different genres and styles. I don't like to be locked into a set thing. Mood is definitely the heart of the creation process, some of my favorite tracks were written after I have been up for 24 to 30 hours, when you reach the edge.

As far as a side project I would want to do something along the lines of more technical, glitchy, bassy song structure. But at the same time do something that hasn't been done before.

IN: What's coming up next for Pneumatic Detach?

Brink: In the works for Pneumatic Detach, hopefully some live shows in the Boston area. Dates undecided at the moment a show with Antigen Shift and C2 and another show opening for Black Lung.

As far as CDs go I have planned a split CD with Detritus, a split CD with Antigen Shift, a remix CD with a good line up of artists such as Navicon Torture Technologies, Battery Cage, Symbiant, Scrap edx, Unier Null, Krept Krept, Immaculate Grotesque, Detritus, Nau-ze-aun and a few others. I am really hoping there will be a wide variety of sounds that come out of this CD, from harsh noise to Suicide Commando-style dance tracks. With a few guest vocal appearances. Then, hopefully, a full length CD.

For more information on Pneumatic Detach, please visit:
<http://www.pneumaticdetach.com>
<http://www.syntheticcreations.com>
<http://www.frozenempiremedia.com>

IN BYTEZ

SIMULATOR

By Kyronfive

With a sound that fuses elements of Synthpop and Electro, Simulator couldn't be more suited for today's club scene. Simulator's Ross Beall has been crafting his dancefloor concoction for little over 3 years, culminating in this year's release of his first LP *Enter The Unknown* on Cohaagen Music, a label fronted by synth-poppers Ganymede. Utilizing soaring melodies, mellow beats, and a small selection of guest vocalists (notably Brand New Idol vocalist Frank J. Freda), *Enter The Unknown* bridges the gap between emotive Synthpop and the more dancefloor-friendly breed of Electro.

IN: Let's start with this; who is Simulator and what is the history behind the band?

Beall: I would first like to thank you for this opportunity that you've offered me - I appreciate it very much.

Simulator is an all-electronic mostly instrumental solo project, with an overall sound influenced by many forms of electronic music, (synth-pop/dark-wave to EBM/technoid/rhythm/industrial to IDM and experimental). On occasion, the project will include guest vocalists that will help widen the spectrum of sound and accessibility.

As for the history of Simulator, around the middle of '99, I started programming and further developing on the actual sound style of Simulator, with a track having some of the influential elements of the various aforementioned sound styles, and the result is the song "Regression" (found on *Enter the Unknown*). With the creation and finalization of "Regression", Simulator officially started.

IN: How would you describe your sound to someone who's never heard of you?

Beall: The music I write usually combines sound design and song structuring similar to some of the sound styles mentioned before. Most folks who enjoy EBM/electro-industrial and synthpop would most likely enjoy Simulator.

IN: Your first record, *Enter The Unknown*, was just released on Cohaagen Music. How did that come about?

Beall: The offer for *Enter the Unknown* came about after I had worked with Patrick and Dave of Cohaagen, by my having done a remix for them for their music project Ganymede some months earlier. (I remixed the track "Legacy", and it appears on their *Falling EP*). They contacted me with an offer this past Christmas season, in that they would release my debut album, of which at least two songs on the album, be vocal-based.

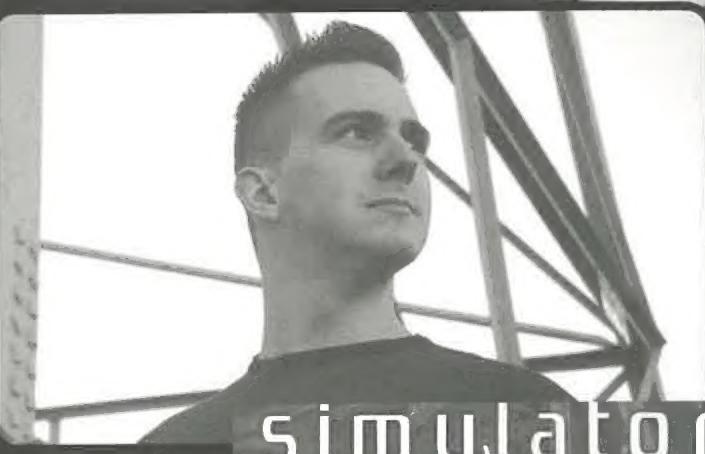
IN: Can you tell us a little about the other people that worked on *Enter The Unknown*? And how has the reception to the record been?

Beall: First and foremost - my wife Leah, she has been a tremendous help in many ways, but particularly she provided the much appreciated help of listening subjectively and providing ideas and alternatives to various parts of the creation and mix down process.

George Cicci (Singularity-Studios.com) has provided an invaluable amount of time and effort for this release, either through aid in production, or information about production, the mix-down (and additional production) of the two bonus tracks, of which the last track on the CD, Rachel Cicci, (his wife) features vocals.

Frank J. Freda (ex Brand New Idol) has featured lyrics, vocals and assisted with the production on "Divided", "The Ghost of You" and "Revelation - Epiphany Mix". I sincerely appreciate his time and effort with this release.

I am very fortunate to have received quite a few all-positive reviews from folks, and I would like to take a moment to sincerely thank everyone who has offered these much-appreciated comments and feedback - thank you.



simulator

IN: Any plans to tour in the near future?

Beall: I am sorry, no, not at this time.

IN: It seems like the US is going through a synthpop revival at present. Do you feel like you are a part of this? Do you think it will benefit what you are doing?

Beall: I am fortunate and very happy there seems to be increasing interest with Simulator. Though I don't specifically write synthpop music, (not by definition anyways), I'm not sure if I'm part of this revival or not. Folks who enjoy much of yester-year's synthesizer-based electronic pop, as well as more recent synthpop, might inadvertently learn of Simulator through learning of the many bands writing synthpop music today, and that would be fantastic!

IN: What do you listen to in your spare time?

Beall: Mostly electronic music of varying sound styles. Specifically - Depeche Mode / Recoil, Covenant, AND ONE, Front 242, eVyn Key / Download, Rhys Fulber (Conjure One), Boards of Canada, Autecibre, MESH, NETZ, Perditions Words, VNV Nation, Apoptygma Berzerk, Front Line Assembly / Noise Unit and Converter. Once in a while, I'll listen to some guitar-based bands such as: Killing Joke, The Misfits and Fear Factory.

IN: What's the future of Simulator looking like?

Beall: At the moment, I'm working on some remix projects for ArtofFact Records and DSBP, with just having finished remix projects for A Different Drum, DSBP and Cohaagen Music. Once I'm completed with these remix projects, I'll begin working on a follow up to *Enter the Unknown*, (while still taking on remix projects during the same time, should requests come in).

For more information, please visit
<http://www.simulator-music.com/>

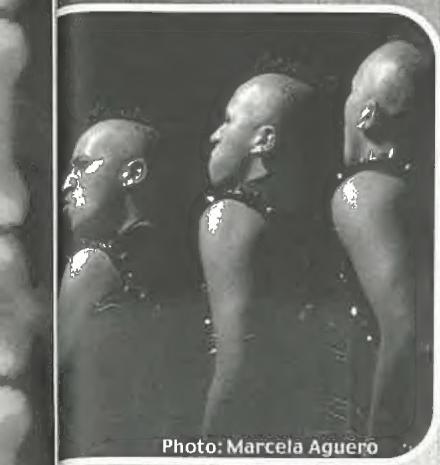


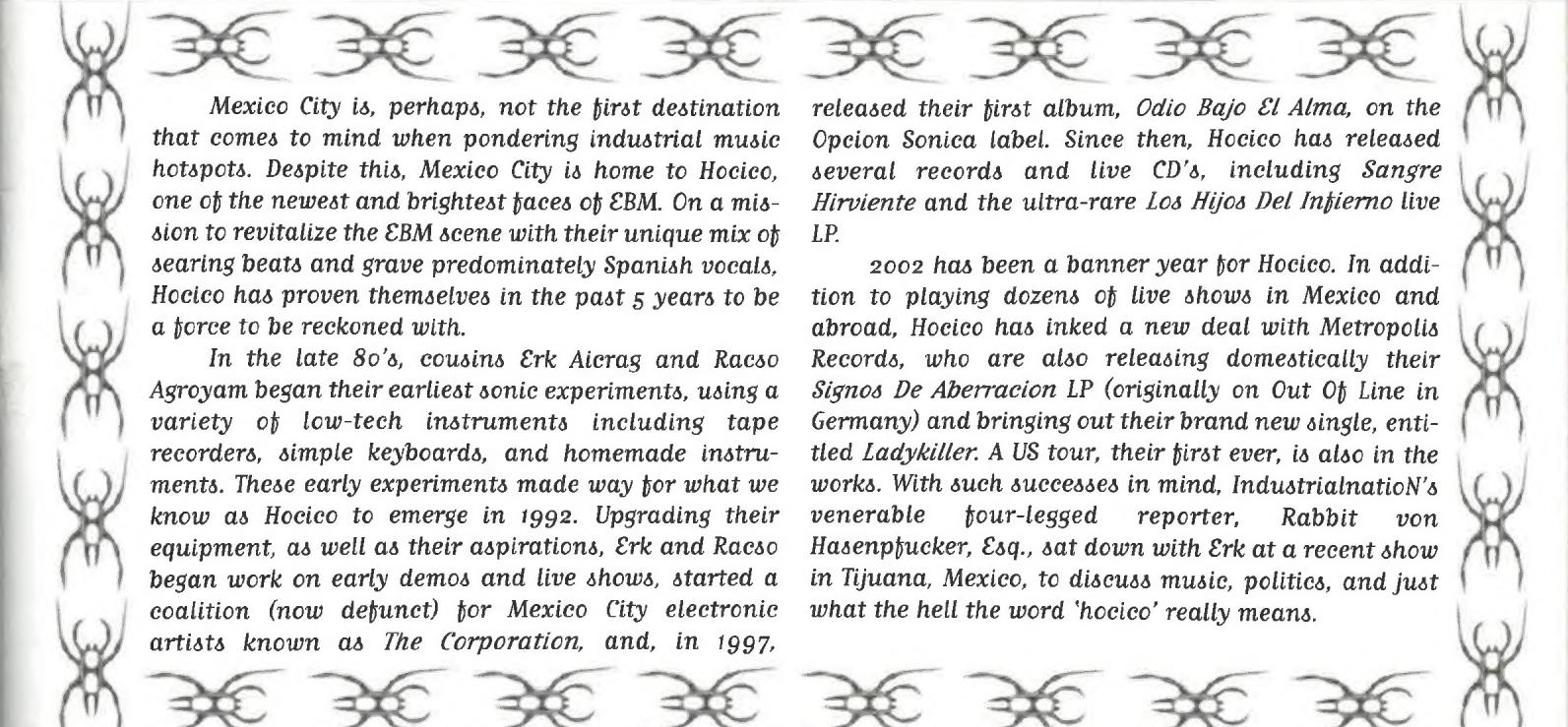
Photo: Marcela Aguero

HOCICO



Photo: Marcela Aguero

Interview by
Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.
Intro by Kyronfive



Mexico City is, perhaps, not the first destination that comes to mind when pondering industrial music hotspots. Despite this, Mexico City is home to Hocico, one of the newest and brightest faces of EBM. On a mission to revitalize the EBM scene with their unique mix of searing beats and grave predominately Spanish vocals, Hocico has proven themselves in the past 5 years to be a force to be reckoned with.

In the late 80's, cousins Erk Aicrag and Raeso Agroyam began their earliest sonic experiments, using a variety of low-tech instruments including tape recorders, simple keyboards, and homemade instruments. These early experiments made way for what we know as Hocico to emerge in 1992. Upgrading their equipment, as well as their aspirations, Erk and Raeso began work on early demos and live shows, started a coalition (now defunct) for Mexico City electronic artists known as *The Corporation*, and, in 1997,

released their first album, *Odio Bajo El Alma*, on the Opcion Sonica label. Since then, Hocico has released several records and live CD's, including *Sangre Hirviente* and the ultra-rare *Los Hijos Del Infierno* live LP.

2002 has been a banner year for Hocico. In addition to playing dozens of live shows in Mexico and abroad, Hocico has inked a new deal with Metropolis Records, who are also releasing domestically their *Signos De Aberracion* LP (originally on Out Of Line in Germany) and bringing out their brand new single, entitled *Ladykiller*. A US tour, their first ever, is also in the works. With such successes in mind, Industrialnation's venerable four-legged reporter, Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq., sat down with Erk at a recent show in Tijuana, Mexico, to discuss music, politics, and just what the hell the word 'hocico' really means.



IN: Tell us a little bit about the origins of Hocico.

Erk: Hocico started back in 1993. When Racso and me, two hardcore punk and electronic music freaks, took serious the idea of forming a band to satisfy our own needs of music. Prior to forming Hocico we experimented with homemade instruments and unprofessional keyboards. With all this we started to record songs and little by little we produced our first demo tapes.

IN: How and where did both of you meet?

Erk: We are cousins and have always shared personal experiences and musical tastes, so Hocico is just part of this.

IN: When did you decide to start making music together?

Erk: We started to experiment with sounds using whatever we had in our hands around 1988-89. Racso had a protasound keyboard and my father had just bought me my first tape recorder, which I used for singing as a microphone. Ever since I can remember, we always wanted to have a band.

IN: Why EBM/Industrial?

Erk: Because it represented exactly how we felt in those days. It was a rebel yell for our lives. It contained the rhythm, the words, and charge of energy that we needed. We used to listen to a lot of hardcore punk, but after listening to the hard side of the electronic music we were obsessed with it.

IN: What was the deciding factor that drove you to make such a culturally divergent sound and style of music than one that is more widely accepted, yet still considered "underground" in Mexico, like rock en español or even metal? Those styles seem to have a larger market out there than EBM/Industrial.

Erk: In those days we just hated the rock en español scene. We just felt attracted to the electronic sound due to its wide resources of creativity, even if we didn't know how to use a synth. Forming a band with hard electronic sound was a real alternative to create something new for our ears.

IN: Was it difficult for both of you to find not only a label to sign to, but to get shows booked in venues that catered to that genre of music [EBM/Industrial]?

Erk: It wasn't so hard to book shows. We were lucky in the beginning of our career. In the early 90's there were a lot of places open to our radical sound. We played with metal and punk bands, so we just played as much as we could and that brought the attention of our former label.

IN: What does "Hocico" mean in English and what significance does it have to your band and/or to EBM? Who came up with the name and how?

Erk: Hocico in English means "Muzzle." However, in Mexico, Hocico is a word used in a derogatory manner — to offend. "Callate el píche Hocico" which means "shut up your fucking mouth," or "te voy a romper el Hocico" which means "I'll kick your ass" are pretty common phrases, so we took the social context of the word. In some ways we say that the word came up with us and not the other way around.

IN: Who are your biggest influences, either musically or otherwise?

Erk: Edward Artemiev, psychedelic trance, Skinny Puppy, Leæther Strip, Jesus Christo, amores perros and Mexico city.

IN: What bands are you into right now?

Erk: Asian Faction, Grendel, IC434, Dioxyde, Talamasca.

IN: Who are your five favorite artists of all time?

Erk: It isn't easy but the artists we respect are: Dwayne Goettl and cEvin key, Claus Larsen, Dominik Van Reich (yelworC).

IN: What are your favorite styles/genres of music at the present time?

Erk: Psychedelic trance, noise, electro.

IN: At this exact moment, what CDs are in your CD player at home, in your car, at work, and/or the studio, and if you're listening to any music as you read this, what is it?

Erk: At this moment we are listening to Front 242's Back Catalogue. In our CD players at home there are these CDs: Haus Arafna, Suicide Commando's Critical Stage, X-Dream, Talamasca.

IN: What is your attitude (if any) towards the new music scene today?

Erk: There's a lot of shit out there. Now it is hard to say that somebody is really developing an original sound.

IN: How do you feel about the huge turnaround that EBM/Industrial has made within the past 5 years and how widely accepted it has become? Has it progressed? Are there too many EBM bands out there, just milking it for what it's worth? Do you think that EBM sounds too much

IN: Do you think that the EBM/Industrial 'Rivethead' scene is starting to replace the gothic trend?

Erk: Both scenes have shared clubs, stages, and following for a long time. Many gothic bands have adopted the

IN: It's quite good that more people are into this music now than years before. It is okay to get influences from any other musical styles to renew your sound, but at the same time it's important to create an original proposal without losing the spirit of hard electronic music. It's good to use elements of the techno, but too much techno-like music becomes something too plastic, without feelings and emotions. They just try to make the people dance without putting feelings on it. Bands come and bands go every year. There are too many bands now, but most of them disappear very fast.

IN: Do you feel that EBM is expanding? Do you think that is positive or negative?

Erk: To date it's been, in most cases, positive. In the future, we don't know.

IN: Do you think EBM has strayed too far off of the path and has forgotten its "roots," or do you think it is evolving?

Erk: It has evolved for sure, there are still bands that

"What we know for sure is that if we weren't doing music we would probably be real criminals."

- Photo: Danielle



haven't forgotten the roots and the spirit of this music.

IN: Do you think EBM is adapting to the music that's in the mainstream and becoming less and less an "underground" style?

Erk: In some cases, yes, like in the future pop scene, but we still think that the hard electronic music is something very different from the mainstream.

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Goblyn, Erk Aicrag, Racso Agroyam, & Rabbit in Tijuana, Mexico

- Photo: Danielle



"We just look at each other and say 'Hate and energy!' before every show."

- Photo: Danielle

electronic sound to evolve and many electronic bands have been influenced by the goth scene. Even if both scenes have different origins, in some ways gothic and hard electronic music are one scene.

IN: Do either of you frequent any clubs within the Goth/Industrial "scene?" And could you tell us what the scene in Mexico is like and how it's doing?

Erk: We usually go to a club in Mexico City called "Dadax." It is the only club [in Mexico City] devoted to this kind of music. In our city, we have an ever growing following for both scenes. Now there are more parties, more shows with international acts, and there are many more local bands.

IN: Are there any specific points that you're trying to express through your lyrics and/or music?

Erk: The music and lyrics express everything by themselves.

IN: Do you consider yourself political? Does Hocico have any kind of political agenda, either hidden or openly public? Do you keep up with and actively follow any of the events that are currently occurring globally and/or locally? Are there any particular issues that you're concerned with?

Erk: Even if we don't consider ourselves political, politics have a certain influence on our work. We deal with them every day. There's a lot to say about it in our country because democracy and equality are still two concepts that are very far away from most of

the population. We don't play in politically-influenced festivals because they are manipulated for people who are exactly like our government, so we have never done it.

Erk: But we react in the way we know, making music and talking about our reality and the things we hate from it. The main issue we are concerned about is the situation in Chiapas in the south of our country. In Chiapas, people are living in conditions of misery far away from any benefit of the modern life.

IN: What is the significance of the samples you put in your songs?

Erk: They support the content of it. They are part of the meaning of the song.

IN: How do you remember "old school" industrial? Fondly? With Regret? Do you miss it, or are you glad that it's in the past and wish it would just stay a memory?

Erk: It was something great while we lived it, but now it is just the past. Of course it still brings good memories to us. Now the future waits.

IN: Are you into Noise (i.e., Ambient Noise, Structured Noise, Power noise, et al)?

Erk: Yes, we like the extreme side of electronic music. Dulce Liquido deals a lot with this style.

IN: Give us some insight into the notoriety Hocico has attained and your burgeoning popularity.

Erk: It is great that all this is happening around us, but this was not our first goal. The music is still the most important thing for us. Now all the Hocicones are our motivation, so making music is a double pleasure now.

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Erk: It is hard to say this because every show is different and special in some way, but we've had very special times in Mexico/Germany, and Greece.

IN: Within the last year or two, there's been a lot of confusion here in the U.S. surrounding your current Visa situation. I've heard a bunch of outlandish stories, such as:

you can't get into the country because you were in a gang, you have a major criminal record, even that you once got caught trying to illegally cross the border to immigrate. Can you dispel the rumors and tell us what's really going on?

Erk: This is just shit!! We have never had the need to cross the border illegally and we have never had the need to be involved in a gang. What we know for sure is that if we weren't doing music we would probably be real criminals, but we can release almost everything with the music.

About getting the visa, I got my visa years ago, but Racso didn't. Getting a visa, for him, is a big problem. They ask for so many things to get it which Racso can't fill. Take a look online to see what a Mexican needs to get a Visa.

IN: Are there any American bands you'd particularly like to play with?

Erk: Ministry.

IN: Tell us about any side-projects that you are currently working on or pursuing:

Erk: Dulce Liquido, Racso's side project, is going to

IN: Erk, You have such a powerful and commanding stage presence, and your energy while up there is astounding. What would you say compels you the most when performing?

Erk: Playing live for me is a chance to do everything I'm limited to do in my normal life. It is a chance to release all my emotions the way I want. What compels me the most while performing is the contact with the audience. Every show is different and exciting for me.

IN: Do either of you suffer from stage fright? If so, how do you go about combating it?

Erk: We suffered from this just in the beginning, but we still get nervous before every show. However, now we enjoy being on stage a lot. It is one of the best experiences in life for both of us.

IN: How do you prepare yourself on the day of a gig?

Erk: We just prey [sic] a little to the Pope!!! :-)

IN: Are you superstitious? Do you have any good luck charms or rituals that you do before you can do a show?

Erk: Not really, we just look at each other and say "Hate and energy!" before every show.

IN: You guys have been playing in Europe a lot more frequently lately. Do you enjoy going on the road visiting other countries and doing shows?

Erk: It was hard at the beginning, but eventually we got used to the tours and now it is something that is entirely part of our lives. When we are on tour we miss home but when we are home we miss the tour. We are divided inside.

IN: What has been your favorite place to play so far? What show has been the most fun for you to date?

Erk: It is hard to say this because every show is different and special in some way, but we've had very special times in Mexico/Germany, and Greece.

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In 1993, Bostonians *Dasid Din* and *Matthew Crofoot* joined forces to create the earliest *Informatik* recordings. It wasn't until 1995, however, that they released their first full length CD, *Direct Memory Access*, on their own label, *Sinless Records*. Featuring the caustic cuts "At Your Command," "I Confess," and "Autonomous," *Direct Memory Access* was such a success that *Metropolis Records* snatched up the release almost immediately, and re-issued it as *Direct Memory Access V2.0* featuring two new tracks and a bonus video. The track "Autonomous," in particular, was ahead of its time, mixing gritty industrial vocals with a chorus that sends today's Futurepop generation scrambling to the record bins for more.

In between *Direct Memory Access* and *Informatik*'s sophomore effort, *Syntax*, both *Dasid* and *Matthew* stayed busy. *Matthew* released his intelligent techno side project, *LogIQ* (co-written by *Rob Galbraith* of *Component Records* fame), while *Dasid* focused on his solo project, *Din_Fiv* and embarked on a cross-country move from Boston to San Francisco. 1998 saw the release of *Informatik*'s technological masterpiece *Syntax*. Featuring nine new tracks and remixes from artists such as *NCC* and *Decoded Feedback*, *Syntax* offered everything from the poppy opening track, "Things to Come" and the dirge, "Retrogradation" to the epic technomeshed-up *NCC* remix of "Watching You Watching Me". *Syntax* firmly established *Informatik* as a staple on college radio and club DJ playlists.

In the wake of *Syntax*, *Matthew Crofoot* decided to go on hiatus from *Informatik*. His shoes were subsequently filled by *Battery Cage* frontman *Tyler Newman*, also *Din_Fiv*'s live keyboardist and guitarist. Together, *Dasid* and *Tyler* have released *Informatik*'s most complete work to date, 2002's *Nymphomatik*, a cyber-sexual, industrial outpouring that fuses elements of rivet-head culture from days of old with today's Futurepop invasion. Offering a hardcore dancefloor assault track after track while still retaining the edge and high production quality *Informatik* is famous for, *Nymphomatik* is *Informatik*'s most promising work to date.

By Cable



INFORMATIK

INFORMATIK

INDUSTRIALNATION

Dasid Din was kind enough to cut his dinner short one evening, to discuss a little bit about his music and general interests.



IN: Could you explain the current incarnation of *Informatik*? Specifically, what role do you play, what role does *Tyler Newman* play, and where is *Matthew Crofoot*?

Dasid: Specifically, *Matthew* is just taking some time off of the project. He's actually moving to San Francisco in a month. We may start working together again then. Right now, *Tyler* and I write all of the music. It's much the same way as it was before with *Matt*, we trade our ideas with one another and go from there.

IN: How would you describe your music to somebody who has never heard it before?

Dasid: I think we're a dancefloor-oriented, electro/industrial meets Futurepop project. I guess you would say hard, but fun, industrial.

IN: I personally noticed a more dancefloor-oriented vibe about your latest release. Which is not to say that you couldn't dance to most of your other songs. It's just that *Nymphomatik*, while remaining original, seems to incorporate a lot of elements that have been popping up in industrial lately. Elements, I think, that come from the return of Synthpop and the assimilation of Trance in industrial music...

Dasid: Definitely a heavy trance influence.

IN: I feel that most of *Nymphomatik* is geared specifically for the dancefloor.

Dasid: Absolutely. That was our intent from the get-go. We wanted to make it a very dancefloor-oriented album. Basically, any track could be fun on the dance floor depending on the people's taste and what the DJ's want to do with it.

IN: *Nymphomatik* is also blatantly sexual. Was this theme also intentional from its inception, or is it something that evolved during the writing process?

Dasid: We knew from the start that this is what we wanted to do with it. Even within the confines of a theme, I think that it covers a lot of territory. Every song is different in its own way. I liked the challenge of trying to stay within a theme, but explore different aspects of that theme in each song.

IN: Is this your first thematic CD or was the theme of your other releases just too subtle for me to pick up on?

Dasid: I would have to say that this one was the first one on a conscious level.

IN: All of your releases offer at least a couple of

remixes at the end of them. Do you have any plans to jump on the bandwagon and release an all remix CD?

Dasid: Well, right now we're working on *Revision*, a follow up to our first three CDs. What that is going to be is remixes from all of our albums. Some new tracks with some big name remixes as well.

IN: Can you tell us any of those big names right now?

Dasid: Assemblage 23 and the *Funker Vogt* remixes are already completed. There will be more names added as they happen. I can't say too much more about that. You can never count on a remix until it's done. It should be out in April.

IN: Have you ever remixed anybody else's work?

Dasid: I am not working on anything at the moment, but I have done quite a lot of remixes. If you go to our website, there is a list of remixes. Look for the "Corrosive Audio" link. I've done remixes for *Decoded Feedback*, *Negative Format*, *Flesh Field*...

IN: The last time that I saw you was when you were touring as *Din_Fiv* with *Haujobb* and *Velvet Acid Christ*. I recollect everybody on the tour being sick as dogs. Other than that, how did the tour go for

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you?

Dasid: It was awesome. It was my first U.S. tour. It was a great challenge and an experience. I think that it has definitely helped me musically. I have never really played in front of an audience before. Not only was it the first tour, but it was the first shows that I've ever played. I think that the experience definitely paid off. Many of the ideas that I had for this album were expanded musically because of it touring.

IN: How does playing live expand your thoughts musically?

Dasid: It was our approach. We had a very improv approach- even though there's only so much that you can do [with electronic music]. We mixed our songs up every night. We had different orders that we played every night. We just played differently every night. Yes, there's the backing tracks that you can't do much about, but we did things differently every night. I would sing parts differently, sometimes I would change the words around. I was very much in the moment, and not just about doing this canned performance type of thing. It wasn't like industrial karaoke. It had a very "live" aspect to it. We wanted it to be very different for us. We knew that if we did 18 shows in a row that were all identical, we'd be very bored. It was getting used to "forming" songs as apposed to "writing" songs that came off when we went back into the studio. We tried to let things flow without trying to think about them too much.

IN: I understand that you also recently did a couple of dates as Informatik at the end of the last VNV Nation/Haujobb tour. Did that go over well for everybody?

Dasid: Those were just sort of warm-ups for our tour that we are planning this spring, coinciding with the remix album. We thought that it would be important to give some of the songs a test run. So we did it, then went back into the studio and retooled a few things. That's also what we did with Din_Fiv. Played one show, then decided what worked and what didn't. It's good to do a dry run before doing something serious. I believe in preparing as much as possible.

IN: So we can definitely expect to see more of Informatik live in the future?

Dasid: Oh, yes.

IN: What is your most memorable tale from touring?

Dasid: It's all sort of a blur. I'd have to think about that. It was such a great experience. I enjoyed

everybody — the band members and crew. Everybody on the tour equally felt that it was a quality show. Each band added a lot and put on a great show. Even though most of the people were there for Velvet Acid Christ or Haujobb, they got their money's worth all around. There were some problems, but everybody gave it all that they had.

IN: What's in your CD player right now?

Dasid: Nothing. I'm in the process of moving, so I can't remember the last thing that I listened to. I generally listen to unreleased stuff that people send me - demos and stuff. Actually, today I listened to an unreleased AEC (American Electronics Corporation) track. It's one of Tyler's many side-projects. It's an amazing track.

IN: What are some of your other musical and non-musical influences in your own work? Film, television, other media.



Dasid: Mmmm, I don't care. I don't listen to a lot of electronic music. Aside from what I make and what people send me to work on, I don't listen to a lot. I enjoy it, but I don't sit there and listen to it all day just for fun. I watch The Simpsons for fun [laughs].

IN: What else do you like to do in your spare time?

Dasid: I love to work on music. That and cooking.

IN: What do you like to cook?

Dasid: Well, I'm a vegan, so I'm trying to broaden my pallet and my abilities and make interesting vegan food that's interesting to non-vegans as well. Take traditional dishes and try to put them into a "vegan" context.

IN: Your website bio says that you're a vegan who is also interested in politics. Other artists with strong beliefs, such as Morrissey and Moby, have made it a deliberate point to share their social and political views in their lyrics and CD liner notes. Do you feel as though this is something that has a place, or will ever have a place, in your music?

Dasid: Yes, but only in Din_Fiv. Because I can't speak for my other bandmates, I can only speak for myself. I have a concept album that I've been working with over the last two plus years for the next Din_Fiv album. That could be a very political concept album. I don't feel like I should talk about it at the moment, because doing is more important than talking. I'll just leave that at that.

IN: Any last words?

Dasid: Our new CD won't be the same old stuff. It's going to be quite radically different. Not only will there be remixes from all three albums with some big name remixers, you'll also have some rare tracks and many brand new tracks as well. It's going to be a very well-rounded package.

IN: Well then, thank-you for your time.

Dasid: Thank you.

Dasid: I dunno. It's hard to say. I think that out of all the acts in the genre, Assemblage 23 is one of the strongest acts around. Funker Vogt definitely comes in there a close second. As far as influences- it's hard to say. I really like the Simpsons a lot.

IN: [laughs]

Dasid: Yeah, pretty much any cartoon is good, in my opinion.

IN: I was rather disappointed when they took The Family Guy, off the air, myself.

Dasid: I was just about to say The Family Guy! It's an unbelievable show! Simpsons and The Family Guy, top of my list.

IN: What are your feelings about the current state of electronic music?

Dasid: It's all sort of a blur. I'd have to think about that. It was such a great experience. I enjoyed

For more information on Informatik, check out their official site at:

www.nymphomatik.com

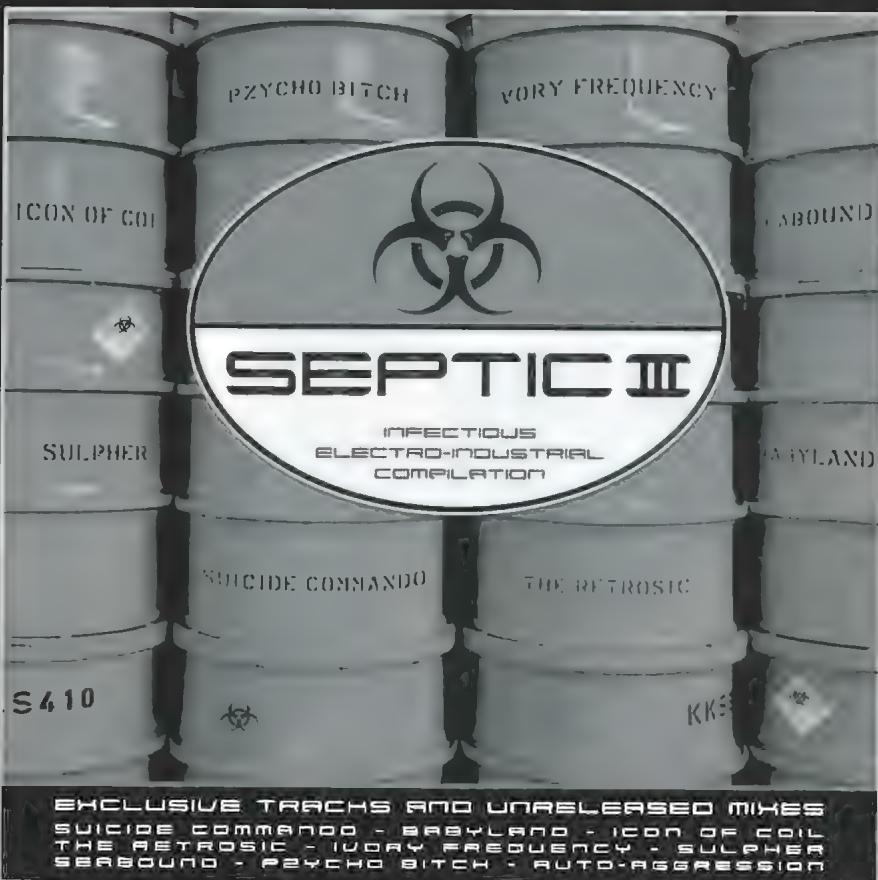
Information on Dasid's solo project, Din_Fiv can be found at:

www.sinless.com/din_fiv

<http://www.industrialnation.com>

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point is to create imagery in the listener's head. Let him create his own scenario with action, love, calm, confusion, etc. Multiple interpretations make music live longer, have the listener question himself and his musical sensations.

IN: Male or Female, the name, represents gender ambiguity. Likewise, Male or Female, the band, seems to be interested in genre ambiguity, or at least the blurring of lines between different forms of electronic music. Was that intentional?

Codenys: Yes, this music has a gender ambiguity, but Male or Female is not Male and Female; it leaves a choice, undetermined. Keeping it close to a new born feeling, to childhood where the innocence is raw; where there is no need to define a gender. Like music is.

IN: I noticed you released a 12" on the Atomic Reactor label. How did that come about?

Codenys: It is a one shot track dropped one time on Atomic Reactor... we were still working on trying to develop the whole band's concept.

IN: Years ago (around 1996, I estimate) there was a rumor that 99 Kowalski (vocalist on Off) would contribute vocals to Male or Female. Is this true?

Codenys: No, but I believe Kristin (99 Kowalski) has a lot of talent as a singer...I lost track of her.

IN: In what way is Male or Female an exploration of the senses?

Codenys: You might say so, if you're happy it will make you see flowers; but if you're angry it will make you bite.

If you are rational, you will be interested by the technical performance.

IN: I noticed some Male or Female material was played live when Front 242 played at Eurock. Are there any plans to tour solely as Male or Female?

Codenys: We developed a DVD release and live images to prepare a "live" presentation of Male or Female. One of the ideas would be to create a virtual singer on screen surrounded by a band. We need some time before we can speak of touring but we plan on doing so.

IN: Out of all the Male or Female material, what is your favorite track and why?

Codenys: Lucent Skin / Kamikaze; because it is beautiful and clumsy.

IN: You three have a unique vantage point of electronic music having been influential in its development. How do you see the changing interests and values of electronic music in the past decade? How is Male or Female a reflection of that?

Codenys: I'm a very disappointed actor of the electronic music evolution. To make it short, it has been taken over by English bands and most of them make everything sound like rock because it is in their blood; or in the U.S. they brought the industrial genre from electro back to guitar rock. The other big mistake is recycling old tracks with new electro features... bad deal! I believe we still need to develop an electronic music discipline and look for new aesthetics and new forms that are proper, specific to the technology. You do not program machines like you play guitars, violin, or any other instruments.

Nevertheless, there are a few very creative forms of music out there and I believe some people will take time to "think" of new concepts. We need to push the limits of music; never be satisfied. Male or Female is a lab; we try.

IN: How does Male or Female go about pushing the limits of music? Of technology?

Codenys: You know, we are still at the primitive age of electronic music. Most musicians "play" with a computer and are happy with quick results; they do not question themselves about the meaning of what they did. Also, the record industry doesn't help; it allows no time for discovery and research. For them, money is music's key factor. I believe we still need to develop an electronic music; to "think" new concepts. How to push the limits? Stop recycling old stuff; explore new sounds and structures; forget factory sounds and classic rock structures.. innovate. Technology has not been exploited properly. Take a synth from the 80s and you'll see those machines have much more to say than what human produced with it.

IN: What lies ahead for Male or Female?

Codenys: The two new CDs that are ready, a DVD as I said a "live" production; will that be sufficient?

You bet it is.

Access more information on Male or Female from the official website:

www.maleorfemale.be

Floating Fish Studios

Any Questions? are proud to release the 10th Anniversary Special Edition CD of their 1992 classic, Prey For Death. This newly remastered release features bonus tracks, limited edition Dig Pak packaging, and artwork by Eyes of Chaos creator, Mike Bohatch.

Images of an industrial wasteland filled with corpses, mutations, cybernetically engineered freaks, and chemical overdose come to mind. - In Rhythmus Bleiben

All products are available at Amazon.com, CDBaby.com, and distributed by Mekonos Records.

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RANDOM SAMPLES

by Todd Zachritz

Welcome back, faithful IN readers! it's been a long...what, many years? Anyway, I feel a need to explain a couple of things before we proceed. If you are reading this magazine, no doubt you are already a pretty die-hard fan of 'eendoostrial' music. You know the VNVs, Ohgrs, Apoptygmas, Jobbs, KMFDMs, Pigfaces, and TKKs-probably inside out and back again. 'Random Samples' is here to present some stuff you may NOT have heard of, devotion-stuff that falls under the radar. Left-of-center, obscure, experimental, and generally unclassifiable sounds that may well not be easily found in record stores. That said, out of hundreds of releases I've reviewed on my website ([GODSEND](http://www.godsendonline.com) ONLINE, found at <http://www.members.evansville.net/tgodsend/>), these sound manipulation are some of the cream of the crop in my eyes (or is it ears?)...

(taking cues from post-industrial / noise and musique concrete styles).

Fresh from a remixed mini-LP and some other notable collaborations, WFTD move into some new directions with this release, further gravitating from the abstracted guitarscapes of their early work and into more accessible and moody singer-songwriter territory. WINDSOR's poignant and gentle atmospherics are wholly intact, but with more of a focus on the concept of song. Dan Matz's soft and melodic vocals are growing in both confidence and presence, while the band's elegantly interweaving guitars are accented by drums and electronic drones. The track "Awkwardness" even has a sort of new wave/indie spunkiness that's, well, sort of awkward. Perhaps an attempt to deflate critics who may accuse WFTD of being dour or 'slowcore'? Nonetheless, this is a genuinely superb release. (Aesthetics)

<http://www.aesthetics-usa.com>

Up next, we have a familiar name-DJ Spooky, with his *Optometry* CD. Paul Miller (aka DJ Spooky) has been a distinctively intelligent and diverse musical voice for some time, but this seems to be his first major release with a predominantly jazz-oriented flavor, and he has certainly found a capable group of collaborators to say the least! Matthew Shipp, William Parker, Joe McPhee, and Guillermo E. Brown are among modern avant-jazz's finest names, and with DJ Spooky in tow, they collectively create a hybrid melding of free jazz and forward-thinking electronica/dub-hop/beat poetry. "Asphalt (tome 3)" seems to be the most accessible track, featuring spoken words from Carl Hancock Rux and musical input from Pauline Oliveros. Later tracks scurry into the nether regions of intergalactic film music, psychedelic ambient dub, and SUN RA-tinged space jazz. Surely a most curious and refreshing collection of downtempo, downtown music to inspire and enlighten. (Thirsty Ear)

<http://www.thirstyear.com>

Some of you lucky folks will know this group as, at the time of this writing, they are scheduled to open the next LEGENDARY PINK DOTS tour. ORIGAMI ARKTIKA's recent CD is called *Fantomlust*, and it's a live recording of this mysterious and unique Norwegian collective, recorded in St. John Church in Gdansk, Poland in late 2000. Using only acoustic sound sources, *Fantomlust* is a fascinating, superb, and unclassifiable collection of music that bridges the gap between dark folk,

<http://www.spaceformusic.com>

On a similar note, we have BRANNAN LANE'S

Hypnotic Drift CD. Now, Brannan is a prolific composer and has collaborated with the likes of VIDNA OBMANA, the SPACECRAFT folks, and many others, including some TV soundwork. Solo, he creates impeccably well-produced ambient earthscapes that easily rival bigger names like ROBERT RICH or STEVE ROACH. *Hypnotic Drift* effectively provides the soundtrack to a lovely, laid-back night at home dreaming of a cool night under the stars. Drifting, shifting, evolving ambience that functions well whether it's background sound or as a relaxing focus. Superb and perfectly gorgeous work that more than ably fulfills the title's premise. (Brannan Lane Music)

<http://www.brannanlanemusic.com>

Moving on from the ambient earth-sounds, it's PAN AMERICAN's latest, *The River Made No Sound*. Subtle and mysterious soundwork from LABRADFORD member Mark Nelson, *The River Made No Sound* is a fascinating juxtaposition of icy electronic programming and semi-melodic drones. "For A Running Dog" is 8-minutes of minimal techno throb with a cool and melodic undercurrent, a sort of expansion on the prototype Chain Reaction minimal/dub sound. Nelson proves his mastery of texture with tracks like "Settled," which combines a gentle ambient warmth with glitchified field recordings and the sounds of industry-a description which doesn't quite do the piece justice as it's most definitely not 'industrial' in the accepted sense of that term. "Place Names" begins with a softly sensitive little melody and eventually blooms into a hypnotic and rhythmic piece, all the while retaining its overt fragility. "Red Line" is a quiet and entrancing dub track that seduces with a chilly air of tension, while "Raised Wall" is an alien mix of cutups and extreme frequencies. PAN AMERICAN refuses to fit itself comfortably into any setting, be it 'post-rock,' 'clicks & cuts' dub, or 'minimal techno.' And although *The River Made No Sound* utilizes aspects of all of these, it bravely stands on its own and charts its own unique and ultimately satisfying course. (Kranky)

<http://terra.pl/ignis/>

One of my favorite releases in some time comes from Australia's SEAWORTHY, whose debut CD, *It's Humbling When Two Saints Meet*, is a gorgeous set of poignant and introspective instrumentals that wax and wane, caressing the psyche with a warm and subtle touch. SEAWORTHY's Cameron Webb and Greg Bird have created a beautiful album of gently haunting melodies and understated yet heartfelt paeans to, well, perhaps the less-than-exalted times in life. Similarities can be mentioned to stuff like classic ENO perhaps, or some of the drone-merchants of the Kranky stable, though SEAWORTHY can ably stand on their own collective feet with this remarkable work. I fell in love with this disc immediately and if the aforementioned float your boat (there's a pun in there somewhere), I'd suggest giving a shout to Cameron and Greg as this is simply a magnificent collection of what I like to call 'pure' music. (Steady Cam Records)

<http://www.steadyteamrecords.com.au>

The Nashville-based ambient/space/world music collective SPACECRAFT never fails to impress with their fleetingly elegant and imaginatively filmic soundscapes. Their latest release, *Inside The Inside*, was recorded live in the St. Mary's Cathedral in Philadelphia, and listeners would be surprised to note that this is improvisational work-a testament to the skills and intuition that Tony Gerber, Giles Reaves, John Rose, and Diane Timmons have developed in their years of collaboration. SPACECRAFT's impeccably-produced blend of electronics, processing, dulcimers, and atmospheric vocals provide a sort of sonic voyage, a travelogue of natural settings and often mysterious, faraway landscapes. Clips of melody assemble themselves, as subtle as dewdrops, while amorphous electronic sound fields conjure visual imagery of a majestic flight above the treetops. SPACECRAFT, indeed. Some may consider this to be 'new age,' but that's selling the scope of this group short. A beautifully engaging release. (Spaceformusic.com)

<http://www.spaceformusic.com>

And there you have it, some great and obscure releases that I hope I've encouraged you to check into. Support independent music and the artists who do it all for the love of the music and not the dollars. Deutschemarks. Euros. or chart positions. And if you somehow miraculously enjoyed reading the above, check out GODSEND ONLINE for tons of reviews of other obscure and independent sounds, not to mention interviews and unmentionable goodies. Until next time, thanx for checking this out and cheers!

<http://www.zeroimmedia.com/>

With a name that represents a brotherhood between its three members, and with a sound that has literally ushered in a new era of elektro-industrial dance music, Covenant have forged a union of sound, ideology, and emotion that has become the calling card of the Futurepop generation.

Since its inception in the early 90s, Covenant has been a tour de force of kinetic energy. Covenant's three members, Eskil Simonsson, Joakim Montelius, and Clas Nachmanson, met while still in school and began several years of musical tinkering, the results of which established Covenant's unusual writing process. Notably, Simonsson, the band's principal songwriter and vocalist, writes the music which Nachmanson and Montelius perform live, while Montelius writes the lyrics which Simonsson sings.

By 1994, the triad had signed to Memento Matera in their homebase of Sweden and released *Dreams of a Cryotank*, later licensed by Off Beat in Europe and 21st Circuit Record domestically. A conceptual dance album, *Dreams of a Cryotank* bore both an instant dancefloor classic ("Theremin") and a 20 minute sonic experiment ("Cryotank Expansion"), an indication of things to come. Covenant's 1996 follow-up, *Sequencer*, cemented their reputation for riveting dance tracks and thought-provoking lyrics and firmly established

COVENANT

Interview by Sharon Maher

Photographs by Kasskara

them in the US industrial dancefloor cannon with hits such as "Stalker" and "Figurehead." Several festival appearances and tours ensued. 1998's *Europa* and 2000's *United States of Mind*, with dance hits "I Am" and "Dead Stars" respectively, have only furthered Covenant's appeal. To date, it's nearly impossible to get out of a US goth/industrial club without hearing a Covenant track.

2002 has been an exciting year for Covenant. After leaving Dependent Records (fronted by ex-Off Beat honcho Stefan Herwig) and signing to KA2 Records, a subsidiary of Sony in Europe, Covenant began work on its follow up to *United States of Mind*, entitled *Northern Light*. Covenant's first full length album for a major label, *Northern Light* promises to live up to the expectations of its growing fanbase. The first single, "Call the Ships to Port" was released in late August and went straight to #1 on the German Alternative Charts (and stayed, there for 8 weeks). A second single, "Bullet" will follow the release of the LP.

Part I of this interview occurred with Joakim Montelius while Covenant was still in the studio recording *Northern Light*. There, Montelius discussed the recording process, the future of Covenant, and single-handedly coined a new genre.

Welcome to Lego Pop.



In a way we are the music we make. It's our life, emotions, and dreams filtered through synthesizers and distilled by computers



disappointed in the process. And also, to be honest about these things. To say "we will only sign for one album and if we are happy we'll stay, and if not, we leave." It's quite simple. Some people, like Stefan for example, have been instrumental Jim Covenant's career for many years. He's been almost like a father to us in many ways, although he's actually younger than me. He helped us a lot. And that's why I think he's disappointed because put all this effort and work into our career. But then again, we helped him too. Our success was his success, and

IN: On every album the first track is for the album. I've also noticed the first track of the album.

Montelius: We do?

IN: Yeah, at least in

Montelius: I never no

IN: It seemed like you show.

Montelius: Well, the reason these songs are the first on the albums is because mood in the next we order you always maybe subcon thematic songs. So the songs are

IN: So you're the first track while

Montelius: No, the way we do it, we want some but also a typical song as the first track and the second track is usually the strange one. Perhaps not the strangest, but one of the unusual ones.

IN: That's interesting, because I wouldn't consider 'Stalker' to be an unusual son

Montelius: On Sequence

IN: But Sequence, 'Feedback,' 'Stalker,' and 'Figurehead.' You could just stop right there.

Montelius: It's a bit of a peak, isn't it?

IN: Yeah, the rest of the album is slightly slower as a result.

Montelius: The one thing about that, though, is that we always make the minimum amount of songs we have to. All the songs we have made for the album get on the album. We don't have any choice.

IN: So they all have to be really good.

Montelius: Well, there isn't much use for making bad songs, if you can avoid it, is there?

Part II of this interview occurred with songwriter and vocalist Eskil Simonsson shortly before the release of Northern Light.

IN: I've noticed you've been writing a lot more lyrics on the past few albums. I know in the past Joakim was the principal lyricist. How did this transition come about?

Simonsson: Actually, I have been writing lyrics, more or less, since our first album. Joakim is the principal lyricist and I have been contributing according to how my life has been like at the time. During the making of Sequencer, for example, I was in a period of change, transition and uncertainty and I felt I had an urge to express myself and also wrote 3 out of 8 lyrics. Maturing as an artist gives you confidence to reach artistic goals and that has made writing easier for everyone.

IN: How has living in Berlin changed you?

Simonsson: I became a Metropolitan and experienced a newborn and reinforced vision of how I want to express Covenant's music. Berlin is a very dynamic and vibrant city with an abundance of culture and clubs. Its history is present everywhere and the Berliners are pretty cool about everything and not so easily impressed. Berlin rocks.

IN: It seems like Sequencer was about musical depth. Europa and United States of Mind, in contrast, seemed to be about musical refinement. Is this an accurate assessment? Where does Northern Light fall amongst all of this?

Simonsson: I guess Sequencer was our tour de force. Made and controlled to the limit and at the right time. Since then we have had, for every album, a more wide-



Clas Nachmanson



Joakim Montelius



Eskil Simonsson

angle focus and have let the music dictate the rules. To let our ideas flow like a mountain river, allow it to seek and find its own natural, inherent expression.

IN: On stage you seem to be the focal point of the band, certainly the band member the audience connects with most. Yet off stage you tend to be a bit shy and reclusive. Also you tend to shun interviews. Can you explain this dichotomy?

Simonsson: It's natural that the singer gets his is the human part of our musical art. There is more or less basic stuff on the singer. I am also easy going, reading one now, but I like to explain to people what other... when it comes to taking care of being in a band

IN: I know. How was the first production?

Simonsson: Different looking for Jacob individual amount of records

IN: How producer affect you working relationship

Simonsson: It was great to have another "member" to discuss ideas with. We could get in the point faster with less frustration and more focus on the creative part.

IN: What kinds of sounds and images inspired Northern Light for you, personally?

Simonsson: Everything I have experienced recent years, from movies to break-ups with girlfriends. In a way we are the music we make. It's our life, emotions and dreams filtered through synthesizers and distilled by computers

IN: Who chose the remixers on the "Call the Ships to Port" single and why?

Simonsson: Both Covenant and our label presents suggestions for remixers. Out these we chose together. So far Heckmann and Dupont ("Call the Ships to Port") and Ellen Allien ("Bullet") have been our ideas. Ellen Allien is from Berlin and she made a stunning remix of "Bullet." I picked a copy of her album "Stadtkind" in Berlin and have been listening to it since

IN: With you in Germany, Clas in Sweden, and Joakim now in Spain, Covenant has become truly international. How has this affected the band?

Simonsson: We have always been open minded musically, now also in a more physical sense. Being in a computer-centred band in the 21st Century, distance is not a factor; visions and comradeship are. I see only benefits from a band point of view. Like a daily paper, we can now get first person opinions over the latest developments across Europe. With the Sonar festival in Barcelona and Berlin being just Berlin we probably are present in the two most important cities in Europe when it comes to the cutting edge of the electronic music scene. But of course I miss the possibility to give Clas or Joakim a call on short notice and team up for a jolly game of horse polo or just hang out together.

IN: Northern Light will be your first record on a major label. Are you nervous about its impending release?

Simonsson: No, not really. We, as artists, can make music, a record label can hopefully promote it. I'm very happy about our part, the album, and I'm confident our record label, kpz/Sony Germany, will fulfill their part. They are very dedicated to this release and are putting a lot of hard work into it. Regardless of how Northern Light will work out, it's a great album and I am proud of it. Nothing can change that.

For more information on Covenant, check out their official website at:

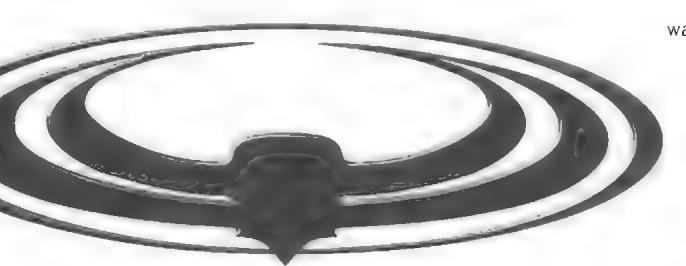
www.covenant.dk

<http://www.industrialnation.com>

IN: Whew, it seems like you've been involved in the Industrial music scene forever now. Tell us your history in industrial music and the history of the DJ? Acucrack project.

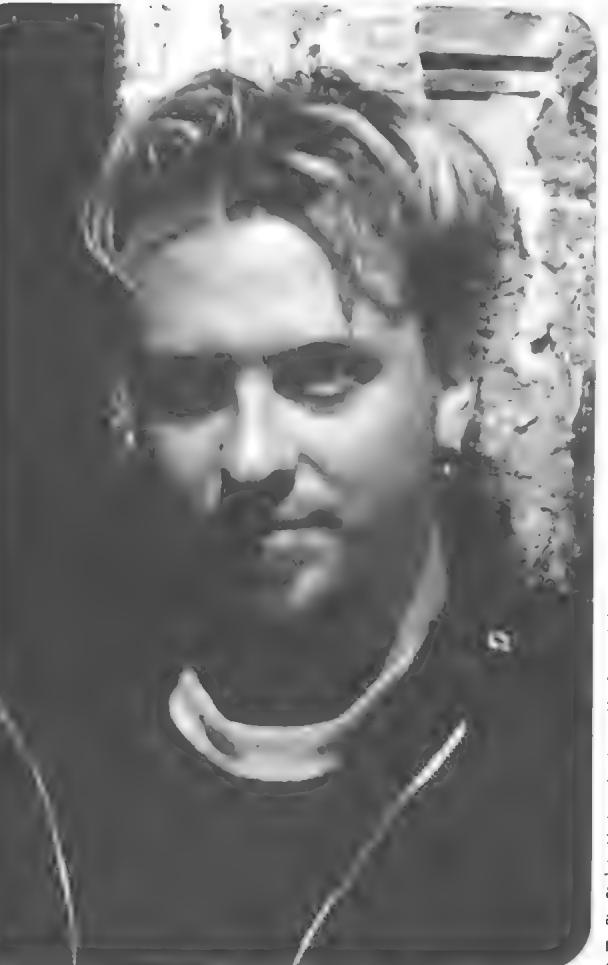
Novak: Being an alternative music fan in high school at the time, meant Depeche Mode, Echo & the Bunnymen, The Cure, U2, New Order... and a lot of these bands flirted with drum machines and synths quite a bit. Growing up, pre-high school, I had been a KICKASS metal-head, which at the time meant Van Halen, Black Sabbath, AC/DC... I think that when I heard my first Wax Trax record (Front 242's Politics of Pressure, bought solely for the cover art.) I was able to bridge the gap, since I felt a lot of the synthpop stuff was lacking in bite (I remember rallying around "If You Want" from Depeche Mode's Some Great Reward as being the darkest.) Having the Wax Trax store 10 minutes from home meant hours and hours of 12" singles, and embracing Skinny Puppy and RevCo, and that whole scene... but I still missed the heartache and melody of the synthpop... so somewhere in my college years, when I began writing a lot of music, a fusion of the early metal, the bleeding heart synthpop, and the aggro-industrial electronics came together as the first Acumen tunes, and from there the deal with Fifth Column Records, and so on... That late 80's-early 90's time was fucking magic, the total heyday for industrial dance music, and we thought with our rocking guitars we were onto something new...

Fast forward to the late 90's, and we felt the scene got totally stuck. Industrial music (IMO) did not evolve or change or develop... there is a certain nostalgic attitude that keeps it mired in the style that launched it (from the 4 on the floor beats, 16th note sequencing programs and Ogre-like vocals) and we just got bored. UK drum & bass was exciting me like my first orgasm and I had begun to develop a lot of electronic music without the need for guitars, so I focused on a new project, which would become DJ? Acucrack. People were instantly into it, we toured quickly with C-Tec, Cubanate, and Curve, and there was a lot of enthusiasm. Meanwhile, the indie-industrial-rock scene was getting shut down, labels closed, bands broke up, fuckers like White Zombie and Fear Factory were getting the credit for fusing metal and industrial (and those guys HIRED their sounds, they didn't evolve them personally) and we got pissed. Plus, we felt that the original industrial scene that nurtured us was refusing to grow, and we wanted more emotion, more melody, more experimentation with beats and rhythms, so in a



DJ? Acucrack

By Kyronfive



CRACK NATION RECORDS

Jason Novak isn't just a musician, he's a one-man revolution. As a Chicago native circa the heyday of Wax Trax, an artist in the ranks of such acts as Acumen Nation, DJ? Acucrack, and Iron Lung Corp, producer, remixer, and all-around musician-of-all-trades, he's been there, done that, and bought the t-shirt long before many of us were picking up our first Ministry records. With Acumen Nation, Novak was one of the seminal artists of the mid-90s coldwave scene (if you are old enough, you might remember how frequently "Gun Lover" was played in the clubs), performing live alongside such bands as Clay People and Cubanate. When coldwave's stagnation shifted the scene towards more electro-based dance music in the late 90s, Novak was already way ahead of the trends, crafting his side-project DJ? Acucrack — a project which allowed him to experiment with newer styles of electronic music. Now, in 2002, Novak has reclaimed the entire Acumen Nation catalog and is on a mission (as any good revolutionary must be) not only to bring Acumen Nation and DJ? Acucrack to the masses, but to form a new culture of industro-rockers with his record label-cum-multimedia crew Cracknation. Cracknation, which is associated with Martin Atkins' Underground Inc., is the new home of all Acumen Nation, DJ? Acucrack, and Iron Lung Corp releases and will soon expand to include new artists. Taking a break from the hectic record biz, Jason Novak fielded the following interview questions by email in October, 2002.

way, we kind of broke up with the scene...

IN: DJ? Acucrack seems like quite a departure from the more guitar-y sound of Acumen Nation. How did that come about?

Novak: Mostly from unused backing tracks from Acumen Nation, and a desire to not muck up all our clean beats and textures with buzzsaw guitars and distorted vocals. We spent so much time trying to fuse styles, and I think that, due to lousy recording budgets and shit, we just ended up never being able to make it sound right... then we would hear Prong or White Zombie, Terry Date-produced shit, and just feel defeated, knowing full well we just couldn't make our ideas sound the right way for 5 grand worth of studio time. So, we split the two, keeping the electronics clean for Acucrack and the metal cranked for Acumen.

IN: How did you end up working with Toni Halliday of Curve on "So To Speak?"

Novak: When we toured together in 1998, we got along really well and became friends. We were out with the Dandy Warhols as well, who were a bit self-absorbed, so there was a much stronger friendship forged between the Crack and Curve communities. I stayed in touch with them, visited London for a bit a couple years later, and just asked Toni... I gave her 4 or 5 tracks off of what would become the Sorted album, and she just picked the particular instrumental bed that was "So To Speak" (originally titled "Fearless") and she ran with it...

IN: I heard the video for "So To Speak" is supposed to be pretty awesome. How did that come about?

Novak: A local production company, Astropolitan Pictures, fell in love with the song and wanted to do, I guess, a very elaborate business card... and so they asked to use the song and make a video of it that we could use for promoting the band and they could use to promote their company. Since they financed it, and our label wasn't really paying attention, well... 18 months later, it was finished, we were already off of Emagine, and now, just now, MTV is airing it a bit on MTV2, and we are servicing clubs and boutique shows. It's an amazing piece of work, tons of digital animation, miniaturized sets, and the whole thing was shot for HDTV... Quite a feat... now if only people could SEE IT!

IN: Do you find there is much crossover between fans of Acumen Nation and DJ? Acucrack? Or do you find fans fairly split between the two projects?

Novak: I find that people who were into Acumen Nation first have great love for the Acucrack, but those who discovered Acucrack first, well, they are mostly electronic music junkies and aren't into metal or industrial... the electronic scene is a fairly close-minded bunch, at least the fanatical ones who we would look to in helping blow things up... but we have a nice little crossover crew, the true Crack Whores, and we have kept things going with them over the past couple years via the our website, releasing exclusive live bits, DJ-Mix CD's, things to keep people with us while we figured out what to do next with our bands...

IN: Tell us a little bit about Cracknation. I've heard that Cracknation is more than just a record label...

Novak: Hell yeah, it's like a STATE yo... Seriously, I started Cracknation even before we were approached by Underground Inc to start an actual label. We started doing production, recording, design and such; even Flash animation and web design, under that name. After we began work on new Acumen and Acucrack records, and had absolutely zero label ties, plus ownership of the Acumen catalog, Martin and Invisible approached us about starting the label and having some control and responsibility that would benefit us much more than just signing yet another record deal... So, with at least 4 records in the planning stages, it seemed like the way to go... now, we are fielding demos from other bands, production requests from bigger companies like Xbox and Digidesign, and hoping to see it all evolve into a nice multimedia venture, a label that can release 5-6 albums a year, most of which written by those of us that run the label, plus do remixes, album production, film and video game work, etc... It is this ethic born of the Chicago/industrial era that fires up multi-headed hydras, with a few people involved with several projects, multiple releases, and tours. I think outside of the rap community, which really thrives on this, bringing up its own ranks and truly invests in its people, and maybe the Korn-Limp Bizkit-Stained-etc line, this incestuous rock and roll ethic hasn't seen much activity since the Jourgenzen/Atkins strains of the early 90s... sorry for the run on, but I guess we would like to keep that spirit alive.

IN: Any plans to take any of your projects on the road soon?

Novak: Little tours and weekend jaunts for now, building things up... some of us are in school, have families and jobs, bullshit GROWN UP crap like that, but we are making it work. If the right tour came along, we'd all make the sacrifices to do it, but right now we have to play it safe. Let's just say there isn't an abundant bank account here at Cracknation to blow on tour support and co-op ads, so it's hard to tour properly. I've got 2 beautiful kids that need their shit taken care of... but its not like I don't miss it every fucking day, and spend hours scheming on ways to get our there and tour, play whatever... and I think that struggle is where a lot of our venom still comes from...

IN: Why did you decide to jump into the label business? **Novak:** If anything, we are prolific, have a lot of stylistic interests, and I get bored easily. Rather than explore different styles that I am obsessed with in the one project, say Acumen, and risk turning people off with our experiments (such as with the self-released *Strike 4* album which was a disappointment to all, even though we love the songs on it) we can funnel those desires into projects of their own, and keep each one pure. Now, with our own label, whenever I decide to write an album or come up with ideas for songs, we are fueled by the knowledge that when we decide, a time will come when we can walk into a store and see that album for sale, and with our growing fan base, can give them all our efforts at a much timelier pace, then waiting forever for the BIG FUCKING RECORD DEAL that will never come... Plus its exciting, you know... we wrote and recorded 3 albums under 3 different projects with a remix album to boot, and released all 4 in the span of 6 months... without our own label, we'd be shopping that shit left and right, trying to convince this label that this other project would be our main focus, etc... its much more fun this way... not much money involved, no label to rip off for tour support, no pricey release parties and shit, but at least we will hopefully be in the black... and since we happily found a way to co-mingle our guitars with our beats again for the new Acumen Nation album *The Fifth Column* (see, we LOVE our history!) and embrace this

style that brought us the love in the first place, its awesome to use the Invisible pipeline to get the word and promo out to the right people through their network that we are back...

IN: Besides Acumen Nation and DJ? Acucrack, who's on the Cracknation roster?

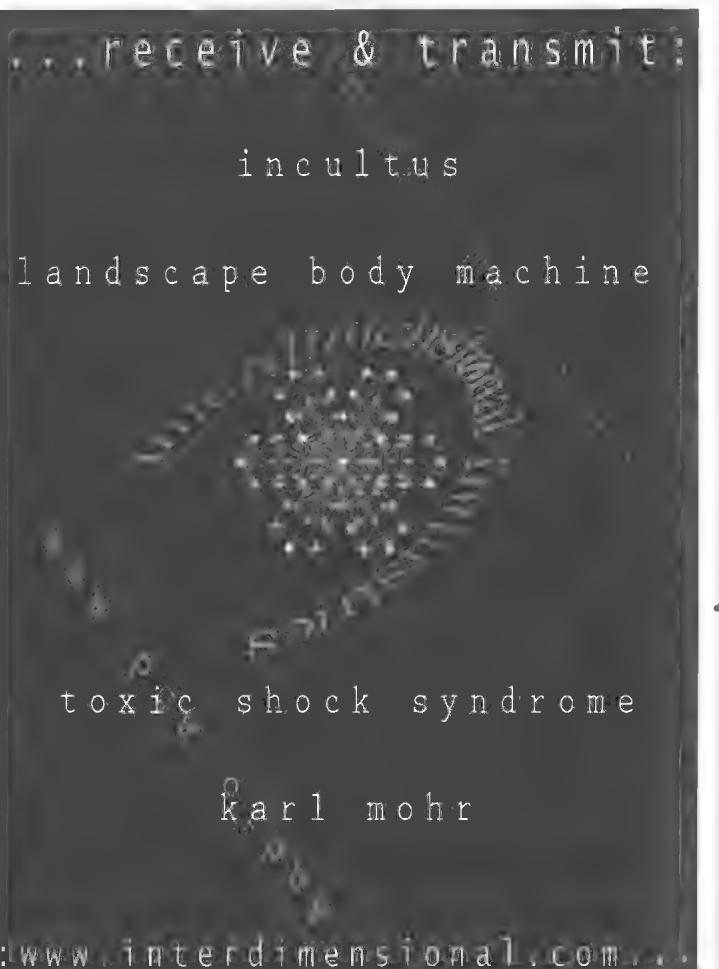
Novak: The Iron Lung Corp is our new focus, with our second album *Ditch The Attitude, Party* in stores now, our final release of the year. This is basically Acumen Nation with Dan Neet from the Clay People, and its kind of an emo-industrial-metal amalgam... we really tried to pay homage to our industrial dance forefathers, while keeping the metal anthems alive, with some heartbreaking melodies and vocals over the top. It's a real fun fuck-role father, all the while keeping the label going, making more records, and building our audience of friends and fans. We are putting everything we can into growing the label, seeking out funds, and keeping an indie spirit alive at Cracknation, but one that will turn a profit eventually, giving us the ability to make records, produce other peoples work, and tour for as long as people out there will have us. I think it's a dark fucking time for our style of music, from the insult of Electroclash to the retardedness of major label industrial metal, and unlike the totally supportive punk scene, the emo scene, the death metal scene, there is not a mid-level successful scene of industrial rockers and metalheads and digicore kids and labels out there that know their history, respect the independent scene, and support the fuck out of the underdogs who deliver the real shit... and that is what we intend to change...

should be out by early spring. I'm also embarking on kind of an ambient IDM project with this cat Justin Sankovich of the Atombombpocketknife, who also founded Epitonic.com and runs File 13 Records... I am also fairly sure that if Dean Garcia ever finishes another Headcase record that we will be gunning to release that album, and Jamie Duffy and I will probably start working with Jared Louche this winter on a new Chemlab album... plus we are super-psyched to being in pre-production on a new Acumen Nation album for release in late 2003...

IN: What's the future hold for you?

Novak: Staying alive, paying the bills, being a kickass-role father, all the while keeping the label going, making more records, and building our audience of friends and fans. We are putting everything we can into growing the label, seeking out funds, and keeping an indie spirit alive at Cracknation, but one that will turn a profit eventually, giving us the ability to make records, produce other peoples work, and tour for as long as people out there will have us. I think it's a dark fucking time for our style of music, from the insult of Electroclash to the retardedness of major label industrial metal, and unlike the totally supportive punk scene, the emo scene, the death metal scene, there is not a mid-level successful scene of industrial rockers and metalheads and digicore kids and labels out there that know their history, respect the independent scene, and support the fuck out of the underdogs who deliver the real shit... and that is what we intend to change...

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www.cracknation.com**



MSMOMNC Reviews

Absurd Minds Damn The Lie



There's really no new ground broken here, but not everyone can be an innovator. [Theresa]

Acumen Nation The Fifth Column



Contact:
Cracknation Inc
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U.S.

The fact that Germany's bio-engineering program has resulted in their ability to clone – not one human being – but Project Pitchfork in its entirety, is the fatherland's most fiercely-guarded secret. That is, until now. Sadly, with the release of Absurd Minds' *Damn the Lie*, the whole world knows that Deutsch technology has advanced to the point that they have not only cloned Project Pitchfork but conditioned the test subjects to release a record that is more authentically Project Pitchfork than any of PP's last three records. Sure, if you never appreciated Project Pitchfork, Absurd Minds probably won't win you over. But, if you've been lamenting that industrial music has lost its soul since the release of *Io*, this disc may be for you. All ten tracks on this record are solid, from the Teutonic rhythms of "Creators" to the languid boom-shaka-laka of "Silence (Can Be Fatal)." Perhaps Absurd Minds aren't the most innovative band on the market, but their sound is so damn catchy it's hard to care. Tracks like "It's Up to You" provoke whiffs of nostalgia for mid-90s-era elektro before you can say "wait, this was released in 2001?" What will those German scientists come up with next? [Kyonfive]

Aiboforcen Sons Palliatifs



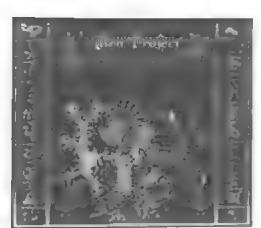
Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue Charles Degroux
1040 Brussels
Belgium

The newest full length from should-be-legends Aiboforcen comes in a regular version and a 2-CD limited box version (as is normal for all releases on label Alfa-Matrix). This review covers the limited version. It comes in an attractive DVD case, with the two CDs, plus postcards and, oddly enough, a rubber glove. Both CDs are full-length, with the first being the CD from the standard edition, and the second being additional, exclusive remixes of tracks from the first CD. In general the music is all elektro, although the remixes on the second CD take off into other genres. This time, Aiboforcen retains the core of Benoit Blanchard (music) and Seba Dolimont (male vox, samples, and Alfa Matrix labelhead), but now with new female vocalist Laurence Hennuy and additional instruments from Thomas Desamoury.

Looking at disc 1, the standout tracks for me were absolutely the original versions of "Twilight World" and "In 2 Minds" - nearly perfect dance tracks, as good as anyone else out there period, and better than most - although there are a few other strong tracks as well, such as "Freezing Dreams." "Twilight World" is a staple in my girlfriend's sets whenever she spins at clubs and it, 100% guaranteed, fills the floor every time. "In 2 Minds" is my personal favorite, though, and also rips up the floor extremely viciously! I can't begin to describe how absolutely perfect Benoit's mastery of rhythms and quirky sound effects are most of the time! He's so amazing I would actually refer most other bands to Aiboforcen- as an example of how these should be done. Most of the remaining tracks on the first disc are also quite comfortable on a dance floor, with a few slower exceptions. Unfortunately, I don't quite connect with the slower tracks, though, and would recommend the more BPMs, the better the tracks. If I may be so bold as to make a criticism (which I will), I'd actually recommend for the future deemphasizing the slower tracks and sticking with the dance tracks, where they are among the best in the world. If I may make a few more suggestions, it'd be to use even more of the awesome, aggressive, quirky sounds even in the backing tracks, which now sound a little tame or generic, and in general experimenting a little more. But at the same time, I'd recommend a hair more atmospheric and melody as well. But the rhythms and experimentation in the foreground are often a model for all other bands to follow. They deserve to be legends. Finally, I also wanted to specifically mention I enjoyed their cover of The Cure's "A Strange Day." Being a Cure fan, and a fan of the original track, as well as being in general a person who hates covers, this is a compliment coming from me!

Looking at the bonus disc, as usual with remixes, the original mixes are the best - who's going to top *!AiBoFoRcEn*-, one of the best acts recording today?! Most of the remixes are consistent in sound with the original artists, and many are quite interesting in the directions they go, so are worth hearing. There weren't too many surprises, though, so if you know the original artists, you can guess where the remixes went. But if you like the remixing artists (awesome bands such as Assemblage 23, IT, and Mnemonic), check them out on the Alfa Matrix website [Sarin].

Alien Project Aztechno Dream



Contact:
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Ari Linker, the man behind the Alien Project has been going at it since 1994 on his first pilgrimages to the mystic land of Goa. Based in Tel Aviv, Israel (also the home base of such trance luminaries as Astral Projection), he began his music career DJing small parties in the psychedelic trance scene. After deciding to go down the lonely road of producing tracks, he would hook up with Astral Projection in their studio, and work as a sound engineer for Johann Bley (former drummer/programmer for Juno Reactor). Last year, Alien Project's first long play album *Midnight Sun* was released by the important Israeli label Phonokol. 2002 saw a busy year for Linker, with the release of a new album called *Dance or Die* in May of 2002, and not to be outdone, *Aztechno Dream* in the late summer.

Aztechno Dream displays the twisted sound of a mad scientist at his craft. Combining sweet melodies at points with straight mind-bending synth-lines is Alien Project's modus operandi. This is music to twitch to all night with a head full of psychedelics. There is a distinct similarity to the rumblings of the true mad scientists, the Growling Mad Scientists, and indeed, Alien Project has worked with them on several occasions. From the full-on stylings of "Crystal Skulls," "Skunk," and the album closer "DJ Where are You" to the updated remix of Astral Projection's "People Can Fly," (originally released in the mid 90s), *Aztechno Dream* does not relent in its 77 minute voyage through the new sound of the Israeli trance scene. While the whole album rocks harder than a warthog on mescaline, the true highlight is the classic "People Can Fly" remix. A homage to one of the pioneers of the trance scene, this track keeps the original bassline and sample intact, but injects a new sound that shows definitely where things are going. Be forewarned, the Alien has landed. [Bill Causer]

Apoptygma Berzerk Harmonizer

Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

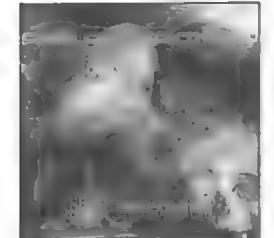


If you bought *Welcome to Earth*, consider yourself forewarned. In the hidden track, Stephan Groth says, "This is the end of the first half, it is time to move on." I speculate he moved just a little too far, at least for his ardent goth/industrial fans. Not only that, but this CD seems overproduced, watered down, and just plain cheesey. That's no surprise since the entire CD was produced by Alon Cohen, primarily known for his production of hip hop and 98 Degrees albums. All the drive and passion that were packed into previous releases can only be found in scarce amounts on this album. Only two songs really stand out on *Harmonizer*: the last vestige of industrialism, "Unicorn," with excellent guest vocals by Claudia Brüken and a somewhat apocalyptic beat, and "Spindizzy," with car sound effects that may just remind you of DJ Keoki's rendition of Speedracer (that could be a bad thing). Altogether, this is an extremely poor effort from a group that brought us great songs like "Non-Stop Violence," "Love Never Dies," and "Soultaker." As Stephan says in the overwhelmingly corny track "Pikachu," "Why don't you just make it go away?" [Nick Garland]

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Aslan Faction Blunt Force Trauma

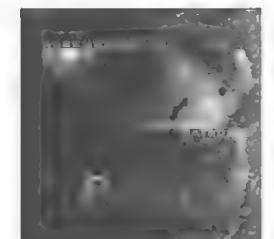
Contact:
Noitek
Jollenbecker Strasse 75
33613 Bielefeld
Germany



The title says it all: hard-hitting electro-industrial for the club set. This impressive second album from the U.K.-based twosome is at its best when it offers up angry, thickly layered drum and synth sequences. In the same vein as Suicide Commando and labelmates Grendel, right down to the raspy voice that not quite sings, but not quite speaks, indecipherable lyrics. I don't know what they're singing about most of the time (murder and mayhem, from the looks of the liner notes) - but they sound pissed off! The songs, for some reason, are listed under two headings on the back of the CD: "Blue Pill" and "Red Pill", a *Matrix* reference, though I didn't find the first half of the album to be noticeably different from the second. The music is also a bit sample crazy, which gets really distracting after a while when you find yourself trying to guess the quote's source instead of listening to the music. Overall, this is good, old-fashioned industrial that pounds and whirs its way through the darkest corners of the human condition, best realized on "Complication" and "Flesh Trader." Lucky Europeans got to see them tour with Feindflug and Hocico earlier this year, and hopefully they'll tour America soon. [Theresa]

Assemblage 23 Failure

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U.S.



Powerful, evocative EBM abounds on this sophomore offering from Assemblage 23. Even though the album is a reissue on the Metropolis label, it is still pertinent and powerful. The BPM count is almost always high, but that doesn't detract from the vocals in the least. There was a time when catharsis and art were different things for me; this album seamlessly combines the two, offering the listener a taste of the pain surrounding Shear before the album was written and compiled. Especially notable tracks are "Awake" and "Disappoint": both exemplify powerful songwriting combined with excellent inorganic/electronic musical accompaniment. [Brian Clarkson]

Assemblage 23 Defiance

Contact:
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Contempt was edgy, *Failure* was solemn but *Defiance* is just beautiful. The album starts with the voice of Penelope Cruz telling us to open our eyes in both English and Spanish courtesy of the movie *Vanilla Sky*. Summoning up the spirit of Gary Numan and the archetypal "Cars," Tom Shear takes us on a drumming excursion with the song "Drive." He doesn't stop there in his '80s electronic music idolatry, as the parallelism to New Order runs rather deeply in the pounding track "Document." This dancefloor-smashing song begins with peaceful male choral chanting but quickly breaks down into a swirling maelstrom of bass and trancy synth lines with catchy lyrical snippets (see also: New Order - "Blue Monday"). Although *Defiance* is full of bass-driven uptempo pieces, at least three of the songs are wonderfully crafted synth dirges — "Cocoon," "Horizon" and "Lullaby." Like an early '90s grunge crooner, Shear sullenly sings "Even though I know it's only chemical" over the ominous synths of "Cocoon." Contrasting to the soothing synths is the grinding edginess of "Maps of Reality" with its quick and repeated tinny slamming bass and high-pitched synth strings. Shear gets bonus points for expanding the listener's vocabulary with such words as "assuage" and "litany," compensating partially for the album's pop orientation. The Assemblage 23 sound has matured dramatically over the past few years, partly attributable to flawless production but also to plain and simple creative talent. Overall, this is the most accessible and most pop-oriented album to date. Let's hope that Shear doesn't return to his cocoon any time soon. [Nick Garland]

Autumn Clan Requiem to the Sun

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Austria



A heavily Type O Negative influenced band, Autumn Clan is, well, all right. Not exactly great, but not eye-bleeding bad either. Take half parts whiny mopey goth, half part metal, and now you have Autumn Clan. The album is a brooding, mopey, pit of angst. With a slight metal sound. The guitars are slow and melancholy, but retain that heavy metal quality all of those whom like Type O Negative enjoy. Needless to say, some of the songs are thoroughly cheesy, with titles such as "New Gothicism," "Hate Tunes," "Abuse Me," and "Symphony of Sadness." With titles like those, I'm certain it can be ascertained that the music isn't particularly inventive, and the album is very bland. After listening to it, I didn't want to gouge my eyes out, but I also don't want to follow everything Autumn Clan does. Rather dull, and not innovative, this isn't something I'd particularly want to listen to constantly, but every so often, it's okay. [MalignantFemale]

Backlash Impetus

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Nilaiah
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After two releases in their home country of Sweden on the premier electronic label Memento Materia, Backlash now deliver their unique blend of electronic music to fans in the United States with their debut domestic release *Impetus*. Their style lies somewhere between the trip-hop infused Hooverphonic and the more aggressive drum 'n' bass Haujobb circa *Solutions for a Small Planet*. *Impetus* is a compilation of tracks from their debut album of the same name and the *Blind EP*, both released in Sweden. With a trance-like introductory build-up, a sinister backbeat and the beautiful vocal line "I'm supposed to trust in heaven, why am I still left alone," "Anodyne for the Weak" stands out above all the other tracks on the album. The beauty of "Anodyne for the Weak" contrasts heavily with the percussive thud and the heavily processed computer-like vocals of the hardcore track "Impetus," which may just inspire a moment of dancefloor frenzy. The slot b mix of "Blind" makes one imagine a late-night ride on the Autobahn with the convertible top down, wind blowing through your hair as Malin Andersson sings the chorus "Visualize your faith in me and purify my mind." Some day soon, car companies may just discover that the intense and emotional electronic pop of Backlash may just be the perfect antidote for commercial cloning. [Nick Garland]

Balligomingo Beneath The Surface

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RCA Records,
1540 Broadway
New York, NY 10036
U.S.



Garrett Schwartz is Balligomingo-a welsh word meaning 'homeland of the mingo', mingo being the name of a tribe of native americans that used to live in the midwest (huh? why would the welsh have their own word for an obscure culture located thousands of miles away? I don't get it, anyway...). Aside from having a pointless name Balligomingo have also released a pointless album. To call *Beneath The Surface* 'ambient' is an insult to 'ambient'. Let's just say Balligomingo is the N'Sync of the ambient world. The album in general is lame. Every drumbeat on every song is boring and repetitive. While most downtempo artists take great pride in processing and uniquely EQing their drumbeats, Balligomingo just uses the same dull loop on every track-mixing in the drums at such a ridiculously low volume that occasionally they're even hard to find!! But who cares, right? It's ambient so who cares about the beat anyway, right? It's about the sounds on top, right? Ok, so let me tell you about the sounds on top- talk about boring. What I suspect after listening to *Beneath The Surface* is that Mr. Schwartz used nothing but the factory-installed, preset sounds off a cheap 80's keyboard. I mean every flippin' song is made up of the most out-of-date cliched electronic dribble. In the press pack Mr. Schwartz says he started making electronic music in 1998 when he finally located the 'On' switch on his PC. "I'm new to the scene..." he says no kidding!!!! What I really don't understand is how this guy got someone at RCA to sign him and release his album without paying any dues to the scene. Fuck that. This guy should still be sitting at home in front of his computer burning demo CDs for his close friends that won't tell him how much he sucks. [Seth]

Beborn Beton Tales From Another World "Best Of"

Contact:
WTII Records
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Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.



Beborn Beton is quickly becoming one of my favorite synthpop bands. Clean, mellow synthwork and mellow vocals really stand out on this disc. But, it is a 'best of' collection, and it's served as an excellent introduction to Beborn Beton's work. I've heard some tracks that are collected here out in the clubs, so the material should all be familiar to Beborn fans or club kids. The second disc is just a collection of remixes – but not just remixes of the songs contained on the first disc. The remix disc makes the purchase worthwhile for die-hard Beborn fans; the collection of more popular tracks makes the purchase a must for casual listeners of synthpop. [Brian Clarkson]

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Soil & Eclipse "Purity"

Soil & Eclipse



Here comes the long awaited 3rd full length Album of *Soil & Eclipse*. *"Purity"* is a remarkable evolution for the band, who already assembled an impressive body of work. *"Purity"* displays everything that made *Soil & Eclipse* a top act in the electro goth scene - breathtakingly beautiful vocals and music that comes straight from the Heaven. *"Purity"* shows a level of maturity and intensity that is simply unrivaled. The Album is already released in germany and received raving revies in all major publications!!

features remixes by *Razed in Black, Cassandra Complex* and 2 mixes by *Deathline Int'l*

Record of month [October] in Germany's Sonic Seducer Magazine !!

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Bio-tek
The Ceremony of
Innocence



Contact:
Doppler Effect
P.O. Box 6417
Beaverton, OR 97007-0417
US

Bio-tek is striving to keep music evil. This little example of standard industrial programming and sequencing is spotted with lyrics like "Evil takes a human face/ It takes a human form. / Evil never truly dies/ It waits to be reborn." - "Reborn."

Or the growled and distorted quote from Crowley in "Prayer." I really hope this album is tongue-in-cheek, because the lyrics are so over the top that they're 'almost' comic. I say almost, because I think this was supposed to be a serious endeavor. There's no comic book evil here. [Brian Clarkson]

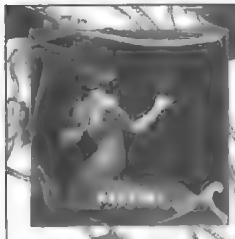
**Black Lung and
Xingu Hill**
The Andronechron
Incident



Contact:
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9313 Lappersdorf
Germany

The Andronechron Incident is the soundtrack to an experimental science-fiction movie that was never released outside of Italy. It's a shame that exchanging independent films can be so difficult, because this disc is nothing if not odd, inspiring, and just plain weird at times. Of course, the standard elements of experimental electronica are found: the mechanized beats, the loops and samples in the background, the feedback. Very little vocals or dialogue exist here; according to the notes on the film (in the packaging) there was little dialogue in the movie as well. The sounds presented here are the backdrop for the movie, and it sound like one strange movie. [Brian Clarkson]

**Blood Axis & Les
Joyaux De La
Princesse
Absinthe: La Foile Verte**



Ya know, there was a time when the CD had the extra tracks and not the vinyl. The two records in this boxset are nothing BUT extra tracks unavailable on the CD.

Last year, Blood Axis (Michael Moynihan & Annabell Lee) and Les Joyaux De La Princesse (Eric Konofal) released *Absinthe: La Foile Verte* on CD. It is quite simply, a masterpiece devoted to the evils, perils, joys and benefits of absinthe past and present. Konofal provided a sound collage of brutal beauty and noise, while Moynihan recited absinthe poetry and Lee provided haunting violins.

If you've never heard of absinthe, it's a French liquor made from wormwood. Absinthe was banned by much of the western world in the early 1900s due

to its tendency to cause hallucinations after prolonged use. Absinthe was used by artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Edgar Degas and Edgar Allan Poe. England and Czechoslovakia legalized absinthe in the 90s, but it remains illegal in France & the U.S..

The first picture disc (yes, they're both 10 inch picture discs) is a reworking of the tracks on the CD. Moynihan's voice is at times pushed to the almost unnoticeable background, while Konofal provides a newly remixed collage. Konofal adds more turn-of-the-century French recordings to the collage, and the result is incredible. LJLDP clearly dominate the first record.

The second picture disc is the only live performance of *La Foile Verte* to date. This time, Moynihan's voice is front and center, warts and all. At times his powerful voice is inspiringly brilliant. But at other times you want to reach through the record and smack the living shit out of him for trying an English accent (Does that make any sense? Why not fake a French accent if you're talking about Absinthe?). Lee's live violin performance adds a fragile quality to the recording. Sadly, Konofal's sound collage hardly differs at all from the CD. It sounds like he pressed play on the DAT tape, and left the stage to let Blood Axis perform.

This boxset will set you back at least \$50-75. But you get a lot for your money: two picture discs of all new material, a paperback book (in French) on Absinthe, more than 10 postcards displaying the various conditions (positive and negative) of Absinthe's affect on the human condition, and, get this, your very own Absinthe spoon. Everything in the boxset is a beauty to view and to possess.

Immediately after listening to this record, you'll want to board a plane to Europe so you can try real absinthe. At least I wanted to. Shit, I've got my own spoon now. Why not? [Rick Kinney]

**Blue Eyed Christ
American Whore**

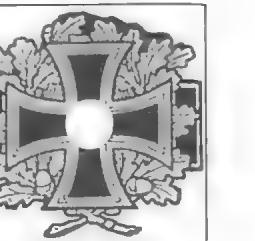


Contact:
Ultrapean Records
13741 Burbank Blvd #3
Van Nuys, CA 91401
US

Blue Eyed Christ is the aggro-punk project of Chicago-sound, and KK Records alum John D. Norton—who is most recently familiar to us through a few awesome comp offerings for the likes of Invisible's *Notes from the Real Underground* 2 albums. Of course you may also remember the BEC from ReConstriction's classic *Shut up Kitty*, and if you are already a fan of his previous albums *Crash*, and *Leaders + Followers*. *American Whore* contains the 2 tracks from NFRU2, "Suicide Beauty Queen" and "Doll," and "Sometimes" and "What I Mean" from the album *Crash*. BEC is wonderfully lo-fi, heavy, raw, and angry all at the same time—so much so that an unnamed bassist actually contacted John recently about joining the band and offering to "off" himself on stage for dramatic kicks. Of all the tracks on the album I think "Sink or Swim" is the most bizarre in that it has this wacked-out element of the Runaways' hit "Cherry Bomb" with its sexy grungy "Hello Mom, Hello God" chorus, and CBGB's inspiring guitar work. Lyrically the album rocks with intensity in your face style, much like a processed-free version of old-school Sister Machine Gun. With 17 cuts in total *American Whore* provides a much-

needed installment of real twisted-knife inspired music for people who like it hard and homicidal. [LucastaSin]

**Der Blutharsch
Fire Danger Season**



Contact:
WKN
Postfach 44
1133 Wien
Austria

Yes, the title is goofy as hell and screams "I just learned the English," but don't hold that against it. It's the most impressive "militaristic industrial" release I've ever seen. True brilliance in terms of its marketing, packaging and, yes, even musically.

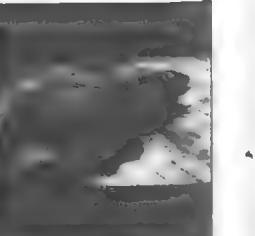
This is a meaty release: four CDs in a black leather pouch. One CD shaped like an iron cross with 20 minutes of previously unreleased material, one CD of compilation tracks and two CDs of different bands covering Der Blutharsch songs.

In terms of marketing, this is brilliance. It's a limited edition of 2222 copies. The first 2000 have the leather pouch & fold-out poster, but the last 222 copies come in a 10x8x5 "big" leather bag. And in a move that simultaneously infuriated and aroused collectors; the big bag version comes in different colors of leather: brown, black, and reddish brown. Coming soon to an eBay auction near you. (Does Albin have stock in eBay? Based on all the limited edition stuff he puts out, it makes me wonder...)

Musically, Der Blutharsch is sample-driven, and more often than not, militaristic in themes. There's a strong range of dynamics with DB that is refreshing. There are anthemic songs that make you want to go out and annex the Sudetenland, but also atmospheric, brooding ambient pieces to sip German wine to.

The 2 discs of cover versions really bring this out to the forefront. The truly interesting covers are by bands able to exploit the subtleties of a DB song and make them their own. Death In June do this brilliantly, as does :Wumpscut:, Novy Svet, Scivias, and Of the Wand and the Moon. There are some bad covers though... some seem to be just cashing a paycheck... "Oh! Here's an ambient song! Let's give it a dance beat! OK, we're done." It'll put you back around \$40 (for the non-big bag version), but it's worth it. [Rick Kinney]

**Buropolitik
Fall and Forget**



Contact:
Propaganda
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not listed by request
buropolitik@skynet.be

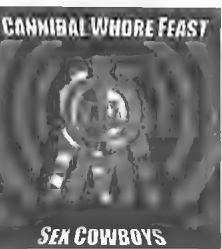
Buropolitik is the creation of Thomas Verschueren and Stephanie Fraikin, a Belgian duo who make harsh EBM capable of moving bodies and minds. This well conceived of project places the politics of militarism forefront, as lyrics lash out at the shitheads who call themselves our leaders. Buropolitik is on a mission broader in scope than just making dance tracks; they stage a social critique as well.

Fall and Forget has as its backdrop dark atmos-

spheres, evolving synths, and distorted beats. This album also features both male and female vocals, a welcome addition, as both Thomas and Stephanie have raw and powerful voices. While this band might be compared to the likes of Suicide Commando, :Wumpscut:, or similar outfits, they truly have a sound all their own. Many of the songs from *Fall and Forget* progress and develop without becoming boring, just as they push things to the extremes without becoming obnoxious.

I'll stop pretending to be objective now; I like everything about Buropolitik—their sound, imagery, and DIY approach. The band confesses to a limited studio on their website, and to the best of my knowledge, Buropolitik is yet to be signed to a proper label, which is sad given this group's talent and potential. Also, you probably won't find *Fall and Forget* in the U.S., which is also sad, but you can contact the band on how to go about getting your hands on this or any of their other releases from their website: www.geocities.com/buropolitik. In addition, you'll want to keep your eyes open for Buropolitik's new release *Tension*, which from a sneak preview (let's just say Thomas and Stephanie are extremely cool!), will definitely appeal to EBM and dark electro fans worldwide. [lynwrm]

**Cannibal Whore
Feast
Sex Cowboys**



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Hoffman Estates, IL 60194
US

Sex Cowboys is this band's first CD release, and with a name like Cannibal Whore Feast these guys are certainly off to a good start! The first track from *Sex Cowboys*, "More," gets things moving in a really nice direction. While the pulse is energetic and upbeat, the lyrics send a sensual message of loss and regret. Quoting Cannibal Whore Feast: "I am not finished hurting you—this is not over yet. Ya think ya finally made it through—you always knew I don't forget." I'm sure these sentiments are easy to relate to for all of us with a Pepe le Pew complex (the overly romantic cartoon skunk who can never keep his arms around the elusive feline). It should probably be said right away, if you haven't already gotten the impression, that most of *Sex Cowboys* is explicit and sexual. Here's a taste from "666": "Anti-orgasm, negative fuck. The bile rises and the senses suck. Punching holes through your filthy crack, gonna twist, the dagger in your back." Maybe some of the lyrics from *Sex Cowboys* border on misogynist, that is if these fellas are straight, misandrist I suppose if they're gay or bi. But misogyny is just another word for love, so I'm not complaining, and the general impression I get is more of raw emotion than hatred.

On the critical side, some of the tracks and influences don't do much for me. While this is an eclectic album, the Mephisto Media website describes *Sex Cowboys* as "a case study in Cross-Genre Industrial," I'm not all that fond of the scratching and hip-hop influence found on some of the tracks toward the end (nothing against hip-hop, it just doesn't seem to fit rest of the album); leave this stuff for the Bizkits and Slipknots, my apologies to the turntablist.

On the hole (pun intended to stay in theme), *Sex Cowboys* is a fun bit of debauchery. The vocals, programming and guitars are fresh and cum together well (again pun intended), things stay interesting all the way through. Perhaps some of the album is kitsch, and maybe even cheese, but this is likely intentional. Cannibal Whore Feast seems to know exactly what they are doing. Oh yeah, one other thing; there's a hidden track to look for, and you guessed it, it can be found on track number 69. [Jon VanWieren]

**Chandeen
Bikes and Pyramids**



Contact:
Kalinkirk Records
Hohmbllick 52
6043 Frankfurt/Main
Germany

Chandeen is a "space pop" band that is teetering on radio play. They have already been featured on MTV Europe and are always featured on the Heavenly Voices comps. A little too poppy for me, with the early Madonna-esque vocals

and new wavy/ dreamy electronics. If you are into all of that girly vocals, acoustic guitar, and accented electronic soundscapes that make everything all dreamy and distorted, you'll like this. The single taken from Chandeen's new album *Bikes and Pyramids* sounds a little too "new age-y" to me. The dreamy electronics ala Delirium are good and the girly vocals have the potential to sweep you away but then added is this very Carlos Santana-esque guitar that makes the song too "adult contemporary." [Lisa Swiss]

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Reversal Penetrations



The 2nd album from Germany's *Reversal Penetrations* is harder, faster and even darker than their outstanding debut *Cut Up Violation*. A well crafted mixture of EBM, technoid soundscapes and industrial noise blends into energizing tracks that are hitting the floor with maximum impact. *Reversal Penetrations* fire off an arsenal of samples that depicts their abrasive and cynical vision of the world of alienation we live in. Hard dance music - straight-up and undiluted!

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Chiasm
Disorder

Contact:
COP International
98 Aileen St.
Oakland, CA 94608
U.S.



Although I cannot stand the pretty, ethereal, female vocal music anymore (I got over it around Loves Spirals Downwards 3rd album), Claire Voyant does have remarkable talent. Sometimes trance-y like the band Curve, other times classically ethereal ala Black Tape for a Blue Girl- each song is very meaningful and soothing. Unfortunately, each song blended with the next and I had a hard time differentiating when one song ended and another began. Oh, well. Good vocals though. And I liked one song- "Abyss." [Lisa Swiss]

Coil
Liquid Soylent 2CD
A Guide for
Beginners & A
Guide for Finishers

Fee Lee
103006, street.
Долгоруковская 5,
an entrance 13A.
"Firm грамзаписи Фи



I didn't like this album at first, and after listening to it again several times, I'm still not crazy about it. I feel almost bad, and definitely baffled, as Chiasm (one Emileigh Rohn) has received many great reviews for *Disorder*, the Detroit native's first full-length release. The overall production seems sloppy, especially on the vocals, which alternate between garbled whispers and tiny growls, like someone was having too much fun with an effects button on a karaoke machine. This style makes the electro music seem extra cold, which may have been the desired result, but it makes the very emotional, human lyrics seem jarring, too. And the lyrics are very emotional and introspective, working best on the first few songs like "Transparent" and the acclaimed "Fight." But after a while, angst and self-examination gets a bit boring for outside parties. I'm curious to see what Chiasm releases next, as what's been collected here seems like a beta version of possibly very good things to come. [Theresa]

Claire Voyant
Love is Blind

Contact:
Projekt
P.O. Box 9140
Long Island City NY 11103
U.S.



Russian company FeeLee received reprint rights from Threshold House (Coil's label) to release these two compilations specially assembled by Coil themselves. These two discs were originally compiled for a set of concerts Coil was planning to perform in Moscow, but some copies of these limited edition wonders have made it stateside. The compilations do span Coil's career: tracks from Horse Rotorvator (like "The Anal Staircase") to Autumn Equinox: Regel (like "Amethyst Deceivers") to Music to Play in the Dark. Vol 2 (like "Where are you?" and "Batwings (A Limnal Hymn)"). The packaging is printed almost entirely in Russian (save the actual songtitles, which remain untranslated). There doesn't seem to be any new material on either disc, but the curiosity factor of a set of Coil releases printed in Russian made it worthwhile for me. [Brian Clarkson]

Conjure One
S/T

Contact:
Netwerk America
8730 Wilshire Blvd Ste. 304 Beverly
Hills, CA 90211
U.S.

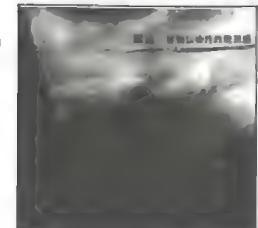


Ok, so if you didn't already know Conjure One is the long-awaited Rhys Fulber (Front Line Assembly, Delirium) solo project. Of course Rhys hasn't been doing anything on the industrial tip since FLA and this new release is no exception. While Conjure One can easily be labeled as 'ambient,' there are some very distinctive elements here. Every song is heavily melodic with thick strings as a constant layer. Samples collected by Rhys' from around the world set up an international, almost middle-eastern theme throughout the album. The first track is a dark intro that almost misleads the listener into thinking that the rest of the album will be a lot darker than it actually is. Track 5 is a bit faster with good song-writing/structure and quality lyrics, while track 6 is almost Portishead-style with an 'ambient-soul' feel to it. My favorite song, however, is track 3 featuring guest vocalist Sinead O'Connor sounding so sweet it actually gave me chills. A few tracks here are really quite overloaded with middle-eastern sounds and Arabian-wailing vocals. For my money if I wanted to listen to straight middle-eastern music then I would... well... just listen to middle-eastern music. I want to hear Rhys' interpretation of his influences not a reproduction of those influences. Also, it seems like Rhys is almost afraid to test the borders of the ambient genre. Instead of Conjure One being an 'ambient' album I wish it had just been a Rhys album and shown the full picture of the man's musical interest. In the end, though, Conjure One IS an 'ambient' release and taken at face value it's a top-notch ambi-

ent release. None of the songs are minimal or boring. They are all thick with layers of melody and up-front crunchy break beats. If you liked FLA you'll probably hate this album, if you like ambient at its best you'll love it. [Seth]

Contagious Orgasm
The Cause of the Flow

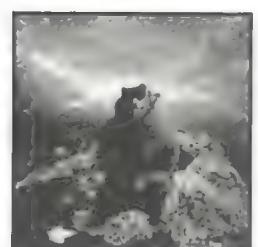
Contact:
Ant-zen
P.O. Box 257
9315 Lappersdorf
Germany



Piano notes, background mumblings, what seem to be 'found sounds' (like paper crumpling or water splashing), almost old Casio-sounding keyboard riffs, acoustic guitar strumming, noise loops and simple electronic beats all meld together to form this Contagious Orgasm release. The sounds themselves are very disparate, but Contagious Orgasm does manage to meld them together almost seamlessly to create a thing of beauty. Some of the almost ritualistic obsession that usually characterizes a Contagious Orgasm release is missing from this one, but it has been replaced with an almost exploratory creativity. The album title would lead one to believe that this effect was, in fact intentional; that Contagious Orgasm is looking for the beginning of the 'creative process', the *Cause of the Flow*. This disc provides all the raw material for any listener to begin to find that cause within themselves. [Brian Clarkson]

C.O.T.A.
Marches and
Meditations

Contact:
Tesco Distribution
P.O. Box 523
Easton, PA 18044-0523
U.S.



C.O.T.A. (Children Of The Apocalypse) have been making their brand of eco-minded experimental noise since 1989, with a revolving cast of guest musicians, including Ian Reed of Death in June fame. This fifth, rightly named, release is a blend of ritualistic and militaristic percussion, brass, and woodwind instruments electronically enhanced. The resulting sound is unearthly, something that strives to be mystical and unsettling, and succeeds. "Deep Within The Womb Of The Mother Part 4" is a great example of this type of sound, a desolate mixture of chants, tinkling bells, thunder, and droning electric distortion. Fans of ritual-ambient noise won't be disappointed, not even by a deceptively short track listing -- the five songs collected here provide over an hour of supernatural sensations. [Theresa]

Covenant
Northern Light

Contact:
KA2 Music Entertainment
Neuer Pferdemarkt 1
20359 Hamburg
Germany



If you were like dozens of other kids on the

in&ripco.com

Internet rumor mill, you might have heard that *Northern Light* is the first record in the last six years to claim the throne reserved for Covenant's 1996 LP *Sequencer*. And while a few tracks on *Northern Light* do sound decidedly *Sequencer*-esque ("We Stand Alone," "Rising Sun") many more stand on their own merits without being reminiscent of any particular Covenant era. *Northern Light* is an engaging work in its own right. Quite possibly Covenant's most mellow release to date, it strikes a subtly melancholy tone, fused with exquisite melodies and a compelling beat. This is not a record that sets out to repeat the success of "Dead Stars" over and over (although "We Want Revolution" should quell the masses in search of a new club hit). Instead, *Northern Light* has focused predominately on creating mood. The tracks are laid-back and subtle, but with enough depth and layers to keep listeners interested. Covenant's recent shift towards focusing on atmosphere and melody over dancefloor thumps seems to have netted them an overall greater depth and maturity. 'Sequencer 2' or 'Dead Stars Seven Twelve Times in a Row' this ain't, but that doesn't mean it doesn't have its own quirky, enveloping beauty. Memo to Funker Vogt, :Wumpscut, and VNV Nation: you don't have to release the same record over and over again to keep your fans happy. [Anon]

Croc Shop
World

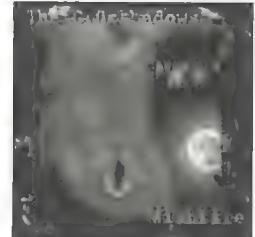
Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 5407
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

I have followed cut.rate.box from the early days (industrial circa 1993) where we included the track "Hemisphere" on the Industrialnation CD Sound Sampler Vol. 1 (I find it funny that I look through my

highlights of the album. But, in "Tragedy," Hale hints that "There's a hole where there ought to be inspiration." I agree. [Nick Garland]

Cruxshadows
Wishfire

Contact:
Dancing Ferret Discs
526 S. 5th st
Philadelphia, PA 19147
U.S.



The new album by Cruxshadows, *Wishfire*, combines elements of VNV Nation (trancy electro) but slowed down a little and darker than the VNV. But I would definitely describe this as a Goth VNV. The vocals and lyrics sound just like VNV, although they could be a little stronger. *Wishfire* is not bad as far as electro-goth goes. It does have its own sound in some songs- soon to be copied by other VNV goth fans. [Lisa Swiss]

cut.rate.box
Datasend

Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

I have followed cut.rate.box from the early days (industrial circa 1993) where we included the track "Hemisphere" on the Industrialnation CD Sound Sampler Vol. 1 (I find it funny that I look through my

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IndustrialnatioN library and I cannot find a copy of this CD anywhere). Anyhoo, I've really taken to this new direction for cut.rate.box, being more polished and synth-pop friendly but still keeping that Ministry (*With Sympathy/ Twitch* era) edge. Track 2, "Ego," typifies this, bringing me back to an easier day. Track 7, "Enigma," can easily be one of those goth-industrial staple songs that DJs play to death. I think if any smaller electronic group right now is ready to make the move out and make the jump into the big league, it's cut.rate.box. A definite recommendation for all, from the previous cut.rate.box fan to the new "I just figured out who VNV Nation is" music fan. [vivigler]

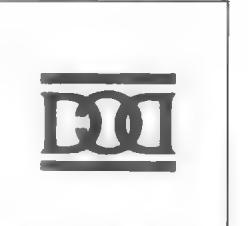
Das Ich Anti-Christ



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

Solidarity is a rare thing in this day and age but the darkwave Das Ich has definitely remained true to their vision and sound with their latest release *Anti-Christ*. If you couldn't deduce it from the title, the theme of this album is definitely biblical in a "Paradise Lost" way ("Krieg Im Paradies"). Unlike Marilyn Manson, who was so anti-christ he became super fucking stupid, Stefan Ackerman, the rail thin and dirt-smeared singer, tells stories, every bit of which is in German and he never once ventures into the Manson "be afraid! I'm crazy Jesus in drag!" realm. Bruno Kramm, the musical half of the Teutonic duo, remains excellent with his Wagnerian way of composition that results in a sound so big, it seems loud no matter what the actual volume is. This is a solid release from a great band and if you get the chance to see them live, definitely don't miss the opportunity to see these guys in action. [nakol]

Dead Can Dance Box Set 1981-1998



Contact:
4AD
15 Alma Road
London
SW18 1AA
U.K.

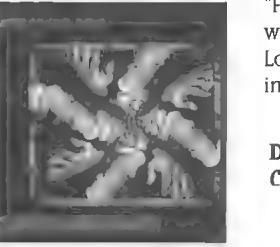
Although Dead Can Dance broke up in 1998, their amazing music will always live on for Dead Can Dance lovers. This beautiful box set contains some

of the most amazing songs from this brilliant duo- Brenden Perry and Lisa Gerrard- spawning from their romantic love for each other and their music in the beginning to their bittersweet end. If you are unfamiliar with Dead Can Dance this is an excellent way to learn more about their various styles of music, which include anything from psychedelic to middle eastern to renaissance. This is the ideal album for a cold, rainy autumn night. [Theresa]

lover, this is a must for your collection.

The three CD's contain songs starting with their first collaboration in 1981, "Frontier" then moving on to the haunting era that brought us "Cantara" and "Enigma of the Absolute" and going on to the worldly sounds of "The Snake and the Moon" and "Rakim." Also included are radio versions of many favorites like "Carnival of Light" and the darkness of "Ocean" (my fave). A bonus is studio versions of songs that were only available live on *Toward the Within*. The amount of songs on this should be enough to make anyone buy this, but there's more! Also included is a DVD with the live show from *Toward the Within* and some videos. Plus, a beautifully written booklet including interviews with Lisa Gerrard and Brenden Perry as well as the head honcho of 4AD himself, IVO. Buy it now!! [Lisa Swiss]

Deutsch Nepal A Silent Siege



Contact:
Old Europa Cafe A.V.S.
viale Marconi 38
33170 Pordenone
Italy

A Silent Siege took eleven years to record, produce, and assemble, and the final product is well worth the wait. Thematically, the disc explores "the right to remain silent ... not having to say a word about anything, the freedom to judge over nothing and no one." (quote from liner notes). Musically, the disc stays very mellow, soft-spoken almost, with layers of vocals, drums, random (possibly found) noise, and organ-sounding synth lines for background layers. This is a complicated disc... almost too complicated to be exploring silence. But, since silence in the Marcel Marceau since is not the point of exploration here, it makes sense that the music here would be dense, thought-provoking, and even creepy in some spots (for example, the way that the end of "Behind the Wall of Silence" is mixed, it sounds like the voice in the background comes from behind the stereo, not from the speakers). This is an excellent and recommended disc. [Brian Clarkson]

Diary Of Dreams Freak Perfume

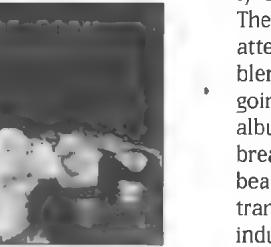


Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

Although Dead Can Dance broke up in 1998, their amazing music will always live on for Dead Can Dance lovers. This beautiful box set contains some

The sixth album from Accession Records founder Adrian Hates is a rich follow-up to 2000's *One of 18 Angels*. A beautiful combo of piano, strings, synths and above all, Hates' despairing croon make *Freak Perfume* a perfect example of goth done right. Doom and gloom aplenty, but never, ever whiny or insincere. Here you'll find a collection of darkwave songs both mournful and majestic, as in the opener "Traum:A" and the memorable "The Curse." "Chrysalis" and "Verdict." These show a dreamy, romantic side to the album, while "AmoK" is an electro highlight. Hates' guttural voice is definitely the best thing about *Freak Perfume* and any Diary of Dreams release - a dark compliment to equally dark music. This is the ideal album for a cold, rainy autumn night. [Theresa]

Die Form Lame Electrique



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

Die Form is one of the most ingenious bands of the last fifteen years. Meshing dancy electronic and hard industrial sounds with hauntingly beautiful vocals without sounding too boring, too droning or too hard is difficult. But Die Form repeatedly does it with ease and *Lame electrique* is no exception. The whole album is a masterpiece with songs spawning their entire career including the Goth club hit "Phenomea of Visitation" (three versions of it!) as well as the spooky "Le Reve" and "Martyrium i (The Lovers). The composition of this album is mesmerizing- my favorite yet! [Lisa Swiss]

Dieter Müh Cari Saluti



Contact:
Tesco Distribution
P.O. Box 523
Easton, PA 18044-0523
U.S.

Dark, versatile, and experimental noise from the Brit duo of David Uden and Steve Cammack, who have been creating such soundscapes under this particular name since 1994. By turns ambient and rhythmic, different sounds have been found, manufactured in a studio, or performed live, making this album a good cross-section of the band's output. Some tracks clock in at over ten minutes, while others last less than fifty seconds, and all are masterfully produced. One song may offer little more than the low hiss of static and a garbled vocal sample; the next boils over into a merciless wall of screeching feedback. "Serves You Right," with its chest-rattling bass demands attention and "Shi Take" is an interesting mix of the organic and the mechanic, a choppy white noise dirge that eventually absorbs sampled bongo drums and erotic sighs. It's difficult to tell the live tracks like "For Pete's Sake" apart from the rest of the album, which is a testament to Dieter Müh's talent, and overall *cari saluti* is an imaginative, schizophrenic piece of work. [Theresa]

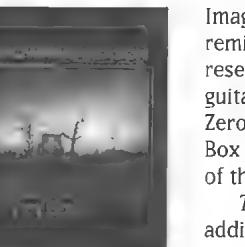
Dismantled Dismantled



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

This debut CD from Gary Zon, a.k.a. DISMANTLED, is a killer- don't be thrown off by the unassuming image of a space Invader-like creature on the cover. Industrial music fans who have been longing for another Tactical Neural Implant would be remiss not to give this album a listen - there are nine beautifully constructed and hauntingly melodic tracks here. The piece "Dystopia" is the one that first caught my attention with its' subtly distorted vocals that blended in perfectly with the symphonic keyboards going on in the foreground. The key thing about this album is that each track (with the exception of the breakbeat "Shift") is driven by the melody, not the beat and this is a refreshing change from the techno/trance influence present in a majority of recent industrial releases. Listening to this album reminded me of my days in high school when I got harassed for liking Skinny Puppy and rekindled some of the fierce adoration for the music that made getting messed up for it worth something. [nakol]

The Drowning Season Hollow



Contact:
The Drowning Season
P.O. Box 477
Baltimore, MD 21211
U.S.

These days it just sucks to be a true Death Rocker. I am serious! Good Death Rock is hard to come by, and I don't mean that awful Vampire Grawth (Two Witches- hahahaha!) crap. I mean there hasn't been any honest to goodness D. Rock. Not one good "Fields of the Nephilim, candleabras and alters, pre-Valor being stupid, Some Girls Will Wander By Mistake, Bela Lugosi" Death Rock album out in frickin' ages. Shit, any amazing Death Rock album circa 1984 is worth about 4 bucks unless it's some crazy ass Sisters of Mercy release or Virgin Prunes box set. (Although I am sensing a revival coming shortly. Keep an eye out for DeathRocknatioN.) The Drowning Season's *Hollow* is the closest non-demo release I have found worthwhile since Usherhouse and Shadow Project 8-10 years ago. It's not the most amazing D. Rock I have heard, but it has potential. Although sounding a bit too much like Mission UK (who I always thought were the pansies of the underworld), the heavy bass lines are prominent and the intense guitar riffs are very well thought out. The vocals are pretty much what you would expect from a Mission UK/ Sisters of Mercy influenced band, but they aren't awful. I do think they should leave out all keyboards, leaving more room to expand on the talented heavy guitar and bass, making it true Death Rock. Maybe they don't want that. But I do! I want to hear more of heavy, melodic guitar and bass but that's pretty much close to impossible to find in this VNV Nation day and age. All in all, The Drowning Season's debut release, *Hollow* is super tight and really dark. If you have any Death Rock roots and

are still waiting for our D. Rock day to come, like I am- this isn't a half bad CD to pick up. [Lisa Swiss]

The Echoing Green The Evergreen Collection 1994-2001/ The Evergreen Annex



Contact:
A Different Drum
P.O. Box 744
Provo, UT 84603
U.S.

This debut CD from Gary Zon, a.k.a. DISMANTLED, is a killer- don't be thrown off by the unassuming image of a space Invader-like creature on the cover. Industrial music fans who have been longing for another Tactical Neural Implant would be remiss not to give this album a listen - there are nine beautifully constructed and hauntingly melodic tracks here. The piece "Dystopia" is the one that first caught my attention with its' subtly distorted vocals that blended in perfectly with the symphonic keyboards going on in the foreground. The key thing about this album is that each track (with the exception of the breakbeat "Shift") is driven by the melody, not the beat and this is a refreshing change from the techno/trance influence present in a majority of recent industrial releases. Listening to this album reminded me of my days in high school when I got harassed for liking Skinny Puppy and rekindled some of the fierce adoration for the music that made getting messed up for it worth something. [nakol]

The Echoing Green has always been one of the more prolific and fan-friendly bands in the synthpop underground, and this year has been a particularly good one for the group's fans thanks to these two outstanding releases from A Different Drum. *The Evergreen Collection* is a two-disc set that covers the group's entire career up to this point, compiling 17 of the group's most popular songs on the first disc and 14 remixes on the second. Old favorites like "Defend Your Joy," "Science Fiction," "Oxygen," "Thief," "She's Gone Tragic," and "Supernova" are all present and accounted for on disc one. If you're a fan of upbeat synthpop that blends both male and female vocals and isn't cheesy you can't do much better than the first disc in this collection. The second disc mixes things up between familiar and previously unreleased remixes. Of the new mixes, Monolithic's "Dawn's Early Light Mix" of "Face of God" and Echo Image's remix of "Heart With a View" stand out. The remixes offer more eclectic fare than the tracks represented on disc one, with everything from the heavy guitar driven remix of "Atmosphere" by Run Level Zero to the classic synthpop sound on the Anything Box remix of "Second Chance" to the acoustic beauty of the "Aurora (Chamber Mix)."

The Evergreen Annex EP, meanwhile, offers eight additional remixes, focusing on trancey, club-friendly versions of "Supernova," "Liberation," and the Echoing Green's cover of Joy Division's "Ceremony." Deepsky turns in an inspired trance-breakbeat mix of "Supernova," but the disc's real highlight is probably Dreamtraveler's mix of "Ceremony." System 22 turns in a couple of excellent mixes as well. This one comes highly recommended for fans of trance and synthpop. [Daniel Slater]

EHI Heritage Gallery

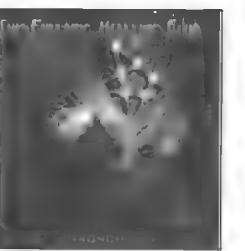


Contact:
Brian Noring
125 E. 25th street
Des Moines, IA 50317
U.S.

Now please don't get me started on power electronics again. The genre's been corrupted by tons of shit made by tons of uninspired (and of course distorted) push-buttons trying to advocate their crappy political 'opinions' with their crappy self-called music (now give me a minute to wash my hands after writing this, I don't want them to infest me with the kind of lame Nazi horror they call their 'opinions'). Right, but I suppose this is not MY fault, is it? The words 'noise ambient' became a synonym for hours of very loud and very flat and very samey boredom and you can't sleep in front of it because it's just sooo loud and you'd like to cause it's sooo boring. Right again, but should you really blame ME for that?

So what? Clichés? You mean them sampled vocals (from gore films, porn films, and now manga, of course), them sound collages Nurse With Wound would have thought clichéd in 1985, the omnipresent white noise and these various feedbacks, buzz and hisses that always seem to come from the same broken amplifier and then processed through them higher-than-odb-dynamics compressors? So why don't we talk about clichés in electronica? You know all this thinking you're talented because you don't answer your emails and speak only with monosyllables and own the biggest arty-farty G5 and the biggest arty-wanky 78" monitor and are full of contempt and make the most unoriginal form of commercial techno but you're using pops and clicks instead of drums so you call it avant-garde art and all? I warned you: don't get me started on power electronics. Okay, so if I want to review a pure power electronics/noise ambient record here, I guess I'm allowed to, ain't I? Because I liked this one. Good heavy atmospheres, you can listen to the tracks twice without instantly yawning, and there's a refreshing humour as well (is that guy talking in a very tired voice about how he should make a split tape only self-derision?). And this one-person label's got a catalogue that's well over 100 references including much more acoustic soundscapes and tons of splits/collaborations! Now that's what I call an active independent label! This record's too long, you say? Of course it is, but would an issue of this be the same without someone not saying ONCE some record is too long? [DDN]

The Electric Hellfire Club Electronomicon



Contact:
Cleopatra Records
13428 Maxella Ave #251
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
U.S.

The Electric Hellfire Club has trekked completely full-circle since the golden years of Burn, Baby, Burn and the late, much missed Dr. Luv, with their latest full-length offering to Satan, *Electronomicon*. The album is by far the most redefining work of the group to date, with the now semi-familiar core line-up of Thomas Thorn, Ricktor Ravensbruck, and Sabrina Satana. After a hideously disastrous experience from *Venom* and back recording 2000's *Witness the Millennium*, the band was eventually rewarded with the opportunity to record the ultra guitar-driven *Electronomicon* at Abyss Studios in Sweden, under the watchful eye of black metal guru Tommy Tagtgren. The end result is an amazing collection of work that genre bends the dark arts like nothing else out right now--with 13 sinister tracks including the soon to be classic metal hits: "Song of the Serpent," "Whores of Babylon," and "This is the Zodiac..." which lends the required serial killer element needed for any good Hellfire record, the deck is stacked in EHC's favor! Then there is "Hypochristian," the obvious stand-out track, that is just plain catchy as fuck with its, "Hypochristian, where will you go?", accusatory refrain--that anyone who has ever been accosted by obnoxious narcissistic bible-throwers can thoroughly enjoy! (Plus it has some very typical kitschy EHC samples, as does the equally creepy and addictive eighth song "I Dream of Demons.") Interestingly, the only track to have an overly synthy sound is "Tannhauser Gate," but I promise you really

won't miss the full throttle synth of older EHC, because *Electronomicon* is just that damn good! And yes, "Mr. 44" will always remain my favorite Hellfire tune of all-time, but I can honestly say *Electronomicon* is quickly becoming my favorite album from the group. Definitely make sure to seek this one out, and let its awesome Giger-esque artwork beckon you to take a trip down the stairwell to hell that you won't regret in the morning. [LucastaSin]

Elfman Common Sky



Contact:
WAB Productions
Altenberg St. Johann
718295 Haide
Austria

Elfman has me torn. These four Austrian lads have definitely been listening to a lot of Korn. They play their instruments well, but why the hell? This shit sounds like Korn! Enough of the rhyming; which is something else these guys try here and there in old school fashion on *Common Sky*. It's gotten to the point where pretty much anytime you have a full band member who's instrument is listed as 'turntables', you already know what your in for. When rock hop bands first started doing the turntable thang it was kind of cool, a new idea, and the scratching worked well between the guitars. But we as a culturally progressive people and society need to ask ourselves: do we need any more of this vinyl masturbation? Besides, it's not good for the needle! Don't get me wrong, the turntable will forever have it's proper place as a music playing device, as an experimental sound tool, and as a party starter amongst the real Mix-Master Mikes, but in the rock setting it is already so over done, don'tcha think?

The problem with going totally negative on *Common Sky* is that if you're into this style, Elfman is right on top of it. Mix-wise, this album sounds really good, the guitars are crunchy, and the vocals cut right through it all. The singer can really wail it out too; he's got an excellent voice. Elfman can play for sure; it's just a matter of what they are playing. I have no desire to put this one back in my CD player, but if you like Korn, I'll send you my copy. [Jon VanWieren]

Epsilon Minus Epsilon Minus

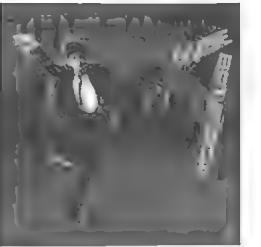


Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue CharlesDegroux,
1040 Brussels
Belgium

Epsilon Minus' new self-titled release is very good. Jennifer Parkins' voice is beautiful. Bogart Shadwick creates some strong beats and lovely melodies, which blends perfectly with the lyrics and voice of Miss Parkin. The very electronic sound to this album gives one the urge to dance. Or at least bob your head in time to the beat. "Freedom" is a seven minute long ballad, and Miss Parkin sings like an exhausted angel who is simply tired and mildly disgusted with everything. "Wasted Years" has a fast-moving beat, which is perfectly executed by Mr.

Shadwick. Miss Parkins' voice sounds particularly ethereal on "Wasted Years" with her soft-pitched, yet strong vocal stylings. I loved this album, and can't wait to see what else Epsilon Minus has in store. [MalignantFemale]

The Faint Danse Macabre



Contact:
Saddle Creek
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Omaha, NE 68108-0554
U.S

Scrape up the cash and buy the album that's kicked the music industry's ass for the past year - these fuckers from Omaha, Nebraska are making music for people who dance to every song and could take over the world if they gave a shit about it. If Gary Numan had five disturbed younger brothers, dressing like him from the cover of *Replicas* and ganging up to make an album, *Danse Macabre* would be it. This third release from The Faint loses the noisy and experimental segways on their sophomore release *Blank-Wave Arcade*, and replaces them with structured beats and more of those gloriously exaggerated synth riffs. With the current focus on Electroclash in music mags everywhere, it's strange that The Faint have been largely ignored - perhaps their status as indie rock darlings pigeonholed them... but do you care? *Danse Macabre* is thirty-five minutes worth of intelligent and highly infectious music that will make you dance all twitchy-like or punch you in the face (and who wants to be punched in the face?). [Inako]

Faith and the Muse Vera Cusa



Contact:
Metropolis
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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S

This two CD set contains two very different sounding CDs- thus showing the extremely diverse sounds of Faith and the Muse. I, for some reason, listened to this "backwards," meaning I listened to the second CD first. The second CD, entitled the 'Night' CD, starts with a live set which they write was live in "heaven" but I personally feel they could have sounded better. I have seen them live, and this isn't even close to what they sound like. The production and the sound is extremely poor. It doesn't give Monica Richards' live vocals the credit she truly deserves. After the live set, there are 7 remixes of various old songs and this, too, didn't sound pleasing. The songs "Elyria," "Mercyground," "The Silver Circle" etc do not need to be touched- and definitely do not need to be remixed as if they were Switchblade Symphony songs. Needless to say, the "Night" CD bored me.

The other CD, the 'Morning' CD, contains a compilation of appearances, covers and acoustic versions. This CD makes this actually worth buying. Rarities like the cover of "Running up that Hill" by Kate Bush, "Patience Worth," "The Breath of a Kiss (demo)" and "Mutual Land" show what Faith and the Muse are really made up of a truly intelligent and

artistic band. With the right production, Faith and the Muse could conquer all. [Lisa Swiss]

Fields of the Nephilim Fallen



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia PA 19105
U.S

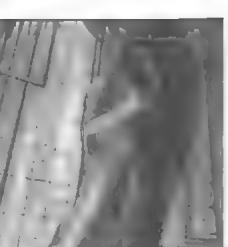
I absolutely love Fields of the Nephilim. I am not kidding. I LOVE them. They are #5 on my top ten favorite band list. Do you remember back in the early eighties? Before "Goth"? Back when Death Rock was still reminiscent of early punk? (well, try!) Fields of the Nephilim was one of the best Death Rock bands. They had a way of combining dark biblical theatrics with spaghetti western guitar riffs, growly yet unique vocals and creepy, moody intros- and making it sound amazing. Plus, their western attire and imagery was perfect. They are one of a kind. Pick up their album *Dawnrazor*. It will blow your mind away.

By far, one of the best Death Rock albums of all time. When they ended back in the early nineties with their album simply titled *Nephilim*, they went out with a bang and left smoke still flowing lazily behind them so as to not ever be forgotten.

So, you may ask, what about this reunion of Fields of the Nephilim and their new album, *Fallen*? Well.... I have to admit, I was very excited when I found out about *Fallen*. Not being too naive when it comes to old bands trying to do a comeback, I knew it wouldn't be like the ole days of "Mr. Jealousy" and "Trees Come Down." With original members, Carl McCoy and Tony Pettitt, doing all of the writing and performing- I knew *Fallen* wouldn't be horrible. And it's not. But something is definitely missing. First of all, bottom line is, *Fallen* is just way too over produced. Fields of the Nephilim was meant to be heard raw, rough. Second, the guitar is all wrong!! My beloved western sounding, rough cowboy riffs are gone! Instead they are replaced by these fast, super metal ala high energy NIN guitars. It's just not the their sound at all.

Some years ago, Carl McCoy came out with his solo project called Nefilim (not to be confused with the last Fields of the Nephilim album with same title but different spelling). In fact, I believe I reviewed his album for this same magazine! Anyway, it was pure METAL! Fast, crazy, death metal. So I am not surprised by the change in guitar on *Fallen*. And I guess maybe they want to develop a new sound. I mean, the songs are good, well written and thought out. And I have to admit, there isn't much out there music wise like this. But, I still yen for another *Dawnrazor*. Another *Elizium*. My heart will always be full of "Love Under Will." PS: At least now I will get to see them live! Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!! [Lisa Swiss]

Forced Cherophobia



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U.S

In a scene that's become syrupy sweet with gobs of soda-synth-pop being poured into it, it's good to hear some electronic music with balls. Ever since Cubanate went to ca-ca and Numb split the picture, there hasn't been much hard aggro electro to get excited about. A cross between Hocico (esp. the vocals) and older Funker Vogt (in the beat and bass lines), Forced delivers in-your-face industrial. Perfect for stomping on the dance floor- or somebody's face. There are fourteen tracks on the disc, of which there are several remixes, some from the likes of Diverje, Control.org, and C2. "Nowhere to Hide" is easily the best track on the disc. All of the four versions of it are great, so it's difficult to pick which is the best. With the exception of a couple of tracks that are lacking somewhat in production if not content (one of them being a lousy remix), *Cherophobia* is a solid freshmen effort. [Cosmo]

FR/ACTION Crimes Of The Future



Contact:
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Oakland, CA 94604
U.S

After listening to this dreadful, uninspired album, I have come to this conclusion: The only crime that *Crimes of the Future* is guilty of is petty theft. The charges are as follows: monotone vocals, wannabe bad boy "I'm a criminal? No, really, I am! Seriously, guys" lyrics, stealing Fictional and Seabound's style, and sounding like every other synth-pop band from 1988. I think the only songs on this album that are even remotely worth a listen are the songs "King of the Streets (part 1)," "Rolling Thunder" and "King of the Streets (part 2)" and even then, that's only because they're all instrumentals. I like "King of the Streets part 1" the best because it's only 44 seconds long. On the other hand, if you love Fictional's "Fictitious," Covenant's "United States of Mind," Apoptygma Berzerk's "Seven," and early Ravenous, then this might be the album for you. Because they sound like that is who they are trying to be. It sure wasn't for me. But, then again, this is just one person's view. You don't have to take my word for it. [Rabbit von Hasenfucker, Esq.]

Front Line Assembly Epitaph



Contact:
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U.S

It seems like most people in the scene have some opinion on Bill Leeb -- the guy people love to hate. Maybe you've been pissed off by his tirades against clubs and fans (possibly in the pages of this very magazine,) or laughed at at least one hysterically funny website damning him, or gotten into arguments with your friends over whether or not he could take Ogre in a round of Rivethead Celebrity Deathmatch. Or maybe you've danced so hard to an FLA song, sweat plastered your T-shirt to your back and your legs offered little support. Love him or leave him, there is no denying that Bill Leeb is a tal-

ented musician and fronts one of the genre's longest-running and most-influential bands. *Epitaph* is of course the latest release in a career spanning fifteen turbulent years. Whether it is the last release from FLA remains to be seen, though it is the final pairing of Leeb and Chris Peterson, partners in aural assault since 1990's *Caustic Grip*. If you haven't liked FLA since Rhys Fulber left, I'm not going to try to change your mind; if you're a die-hard fan, you most likely own *Epitaph* already. But for those still sitting on the fence trying to decide if this CD is worth owning, know this: this is not a bad album. It's not FLA's best, either. *Epitaph* is densely layered with electronics that shift between trance and heavy percussion work, often in the same song. Leeb whispers his way through an album about a world approaching extinction (yet again,) but more than that, one gets the feeling that this retrospective album is a send-off for FLA as well - "A quiet moment to myself, reflecting somewhere in the past, I hope this feeling always lasts," he hisses on "Everything Must Perish." It would be an ideal memorial for a once-great band, as a lot of the songs contained here sound identical to earlier FLA offerings, Front Line Assembly covering Front Line. For example, "Dead Planet" is reminiscent of "Plasticity," "Everything Must Perish" is similar to "Sadomasochism," and "Krank It Up" would do just as good a job of packing a dancefloor as "Columbian Necktie." Those were good songs, so then are these. But you could just listen to the originals. Not everything is rehashed, however, as the influence of Leeb's various side projects, namely Delirium, is felt in the music, working best on the haunting "Existence," and the whole album is thankfully free of Event Horizon samples (Damn you Leeb!) You kick-started an irritating industrial music cliché! After such a long career, it would seem almost forgivable to recycle bits of such a formidable back catalogue, but I for one expected something new from a group that claims it is full of fresh ideas. *Epitaph* has a nice, solid sound, but it is a sound that has been heard too often before. [Theresa]

Funker Vogt Survivor



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Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S

There's no need for me to tell you how eagerly I was looking forward to this release. However, when I got it, upon the first few listens, I was totally let down. *Survivor*, in my humble opinion, sounds too much like *Maschine Zeit*. One of the things that I liked the most about Funker Vogt was the fact that every album sounded a little bit different. Unfortunately, this was not the case with *Survivor*. Now don't get me wrong, I did like most of the album. I guess that, after the release of the 2CD set, I was expecting this album to have more of the impact on me than it did. But, nonetheless, I liked it, as a whole. The beats were strong, the music was better orchestrated, and, for the most part, the lyrics were great. Favorites on the album were "Obscure Pictures," for its strong beats, "Faster Life," and "Red Queen." All in all, I thought that it had nice lyrics, with the exception of "Final Thrill," "Date of Expiration," and "Compulsions." Example: "Give Me Golden Showers/Give Me A New Thrill???" on "Final Thrill." Gunter, I didn't know you were into that, you sick bastard!

Funker Vogt Date of Expiration



Contact:
Synthetic Symphony
c/o SPV GmbH
P.O. Box 721147
30531 Hanover
Germany

This import single from the forthcoming album *Survivor* offers up the trademark Funker Vogt sound that has made this band a staple of the scene. Combining the distorted growls of Jens Kastel with the familiar beats of many past Funker Vogt songs, especially that found on the last album, *Date of Expiration* also has a melodic, catchy synth thread running through it, a la Fictional, which makes it enjoyable. The synths are best showcased on the

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Still, the lyrics are a lot better than the lyrics to "Shaven" off of *Execution Tracks*. Also, as was the case with "Date of Expiration," they're actually singing a song about love. I thought they were all about being militant. You never can tell with Funker Vogt. The song that really got my goat was "Compulsions," which is about being addicted to morphine. Not really such a positive message to be sending out, is it? I see how the song is a story about a soldier who was left to die with shrapnel in his leg and he takes the morphine to help deal with the pain, but then he becomes addicted to it. But even still, if taken in the wrong context, people might think it's cool to start shooting up morphine because they might think that the band is praising it. Or even worse, what if some parents group gets a hold of it? Remember in the '80s when we had all those controversial censorship hearings? Who wants to relive that? Keep in mind, we have yet another censorship hungry republican in office. Bad move, guys. A real bad move. [Rabbit von Hasenfucker, Esq.]

Fuxa The Modified Mechanics of this Device



Contact:
Antenna
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Burton on Trent DE14 2ZK
U.K.

A record starting off with a Suicide cover can't be wrong, don't you think? And that Suicide cover features Spacemen Soric Boom on vocals and is one hell of a psyche-pop hit. But what about the rest, my boy, is it worth getting this record just for that song (it is), and how am I going to trick my little sister into buying this with her birthday money (the way you cope with your own personal little treason is your own little problem) and all. You definitely should buy this with your own money because I think your little sister would listen to it and then keep it. It's mostly, er, ambient, you know, and very different from the song it starts off with and travelling through synth-only melodic tracks and somewhat dub things layered with other warm and analogue sounding (emulated?) ARPs and SH-101. And some pop again, further in the record. And though it keeps brilliantly short enough, it takes time to travel through a lot of different places. I bet Mr Klaus Schultze could've been doing this sort of music if them hardware instruments manufacturers had emphasized the sound instead of the interface. If I had a taste for stupid jokes (I have) I could easily say this is moogy blues. [DDN]

God Module Perception



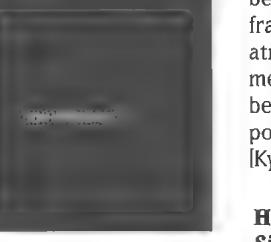
Contact:
Sector 9 Studios
P.O. Box 784355
Winter Garden, FL 34778
U.S.

I believe this is God Module's second release, and from what I recall this is a little more accessible than their debut. It's very trance-influenced EBM, at times perhaps even a little too trance-influenced, but quite catchy and dance-friendly. The title track is the most trance-influenced, but it's not bad. The second original track, "Transcend," is an awesome

dance track with some very nice melodies thrown in! Finally, Interference is pretty Funker Vogt aggro, and more elektro, which always makes me happy, too. The Infekktion and Grendel mixes go even more EBM than their originals, with Grendel adding samples from a movie I know I've seen, and it all works. The Infekktion mix also adds some truly amazing background sounds that really enrich the track! The Cultur Kultur, meanwhile, ups the future pop factor (i.e. keeps the trance, but makes it more punchy, and emphasizes the song structure more). I want to like Dismantled more, but they're just too slow and introspective for my tastes, and that comes across again on their mix here. Parallel and Cut.Rate.Box make boring trance remixes of arguably the best song on the disc (*Transcend*), so I'll stick with the original. Finally L'amé Immortelle's mix of "Interference" was surprisingly uninspired and uncatchy - it wants to be a floor filler, but falls a little short for me - while Stromkern's mix of the same track was surprisingly sparse and slow, although well produced, but again not to my tastes. I can respect what I think they were trying to do, however.

In general, it was usually pretty catchy, sometimes very much so, with good dancefloor beats. I can't make out the lyrics easily, which is probably also for the best. My main criticism is there are too many trance clichés and standard trance sounds. More quirkiness and originality in general would be appreciated. Overall, I enjoyed it, though, and would recommend it to others. [Sarin]

Gothminister Angel



Contact:
Tatra Records
Box 96
N1451 Nesooontangen
Norway

The new EP from Gothminister leaves something to be desired. There is nothing new or innovative about this coldwave/industrial band. Quite frankly, I think guitar oriented industrial is sorta dated. And the evil growly vocals as well. Unless done well ala: Wumpscut, it shouldn't be done at all. [Lisa Swiss]

Haujobb Penetration CDS

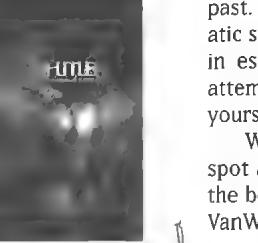


Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

After completely snubbing their noses to the industrial fans that made them popular, Haujobb returned with *Polarity* as the antidote to the minimalist technoid *ninetynine*. Now, with even more force than before, they deliver us to a new level of EBM with the *Penetration* single as a teaser for their upcoming album *Vertical Theory*. This is a 10-track record, but only consists of four songs, only two of which are new. So, seven of the tracks are remixes of *Penetration*, which at times can become completely monotonous. One might think that remixers such as Forma Tadre, Converter and Assemblage 23 would lend some form of variance to the record. Although the original song is very good, the remixing treat-

ment seems clonal. The best mix on the record is the Assemblage 23 Remix. It, and the Forma Tadre Remix are the only ones that manage to sound like a re-interpretation rather than sounding like duplications with a few added blips. Give this CD a listen, but don't let the remixes taint your anticipation of the upcoming album. [Nick Garland]

HMB Great Industrial Love Affairs

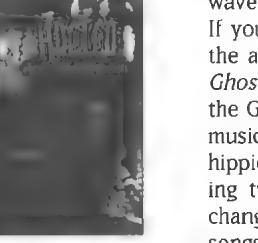


Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60615
U.S.

What do you get when you stick Haujobb, Claire Voyant, In Strict Confidence, and Lights of Euphoria in a five disc CD player and then press play? HMB, apparently, although the resulting sound is probably not what you would expect. Comprised primarily of Haujobb ringleader Daniel Myer and Clare Voyant vocalist Victoria Lloyd with ISC vocalist Dennis Ostermann dropping by to sing lyrics penned by Lights of Euphoria's Torben Schmidt on one track, HMB might be the industrial name dropper's record of the year. While HMB is patently elektro in its stylistic leanings, Myer name checks EBM, techno, and trance enough to keep the sound interesting. Hitting its stride by track 3 with "This Fire," Myer's moody, beat-laden elektro soundscapes are the perfect frame for Lloyd's lush vocals. Spanning between the atmospheric swirlings of "Revelation" to the pummeling beats of "Turn to Stone," HMB dishes up a bevy of moods while maintaining its dancefloor composure. In all, an intelligent, enjoyable release. [Kyronfive]

In general, it was usually pretty catchy, sometimes very much so, with good dancefloor beats. I can't make out the lyrics easily, which is probably also for the best. My main criticism is there are too many trance clichés and standard trance sounds. More quirkiness and originality in general would be appreciated. Overall, I enjoyed it, though, and would recommend it to others. [Sarin]

Hocico Signos de Aberracion



Contact:
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U.S.

Residing in the industrial wasteland of Mexico City, Raco Agroyam and Erik Aicrag live and breath pollution and decay. These aren't mere themes in Hocico's music, they are Hocico's music. Listening to Hocico, one also hears stories of pain, abuse, suicide and death. Hocico combine the contradictions of our modern world: progressive high-tech cyber intensity on the one hand, and dystopian toxic human waste on the other. The band explains on their website; "Hocico is our way of living and of thinking, it is the way in which we see the behavior of the world, and how hope, deception and hate maintain a constant fight inside the human conscience." Hocico epitomizes dark electro.

Hocico, pronounced "Osziko," continue their assault on the industrial music scene with their latest release *Signos de Aberracion*, an aggressive collection of hard line dance tracks, with a few soft spots mixed in between. One of those soft spots is the opening song; "Pandemonium," which features a piano lead accompanied by synthetic orchestration. The majority of the album is classic Hocico: distorted vocals, frantic sequences, and heavy beats.

"Bloodshed" may be one of the best offerings from *Signos de Aberracion*, but "Instincts of Perversion" and "Wounds" are in close contention.

The artwork for *Signos de Aberracion* is as provocative as the music. Looking closely at the CD booklet, one can make out what appears to be a torn and tattered lazy boy reclining chair, a Mexican statuette, and what is likely the ruins of Mexico City past. Turning the pages, one also finds their emblematic spider, more ruins, song lyrics, and a dedication in español, which won't be butchered here in an attempt to translate, but it is encouraged that you yourself make the effort to decipher it. [Nick Garland]

Icon of Coil The Soul is in the Software



Contact:
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U.S.

The Hungry Ghost The Hungry Ghost



Contact:
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Ferndale, MI 48220
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As I was looking over the cover letter for the Hungry Ghosts' new self-titled album, my Grandmother came in to talk to me. She inquired what I was doing, and I told her. She asked to see the letter, and after her perusal of it, her comment sums up exactly how I felt about the letter as well. "Who would be so full of themselves to write a cover letter like this?" I am quite certain she was referring to the comment "For maximum effect, listen to this with the lights out..." at the end of the letter.

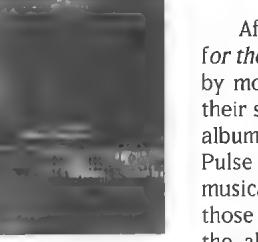
The press release (which 'The Ghost' was so kind to include) calls the album "a bizarre blend of dark-wave, trip-hop and traditional eastern instruments." If you like "Gothic-Trip-Hop" then this is definitely the album for you. Personally, I found *The Hungry Ghost* to be positively dull. The vocals are bland, and the Ghost sounds a little on the tone-deaf side. The music is slow-paced and unoriginal. You know that hippie down on the corner, plucking out that annoying twang on his acoustic guitar and begging for change? That annoying twang can be found on the songs "Heaven is a Dark Place," "Haunted" and "Frightened." The press release called it "bluesy guitar hook." The lyrics are cheesy, with "X Files inspired odes," vampires, angels wearing black, perpetual night, and even "an old-fashioned protest song." I would rather listen to a mangy hamster on valium attempting to run on its rusted wheel, but flopping out miserably, then listen to *The Hungry Ghost* again. [MalignantFemale]

Imperative Reaction Ruined



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

Burn vs. Sshe Retina Stimulants Subfrield Traffic Perfection



Contact:
Horchl c/o Ars Macabre
Waldemarstrasse 7
18057 Rostock
Germany

Any fan of brooding experimental music should find this disc by any means necessary. This collaboration between two Italian noise artists is nothing short of phenomenal. Each of the ten tracks featured

here began as the same set of samples and basic loops, but the treatment and reassembly of the basic parts is completely different for each track. The slow, almost melancholy tempo remains consistent throughout the disc. It could easily become the background music for summoning demons, plotting world domination, or any other thing the dark side of the heart desires. [Brian Clarkson]

Implant U.F.F.

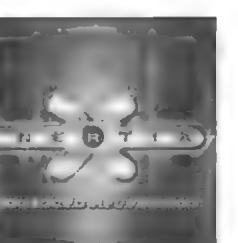
backs to the early 1990s. Lyrically, *Ruined* seems like all the other pop albums out on the market with its direct and uninspiring lyrics that lack much symbolism, let alone creativity. However, for what is absent

lyrical, Imperative Reaction make up with the vocals, which are certainly the highlight of the album. It is fairly well-balanced with such tracks as the downtempo "Disoriented," with melancholy vocals provided by Lisbeth Boada and the dance-floor-smashing "Fault" that showcases the power and intensity of Ted Phelps' voice. For the hardcore industrialists out there, this is a must have CD. Besides, as Phelps says in "Fault," "but what does it matter when there's nothing left to lose?" [Nick Garland]

Implant
U.F.F.

An extremely trancy feel saturates every track on the first of this two-disc album. *Unidentified Flying Frequencies* is continuously upbeat, but in no way aggressive, and thankfully short. When I played the first track, "Log on/Log off" I was intrigued - lots of bleeps and thumping percussion, like a futuristic sci-fi movie or video game soundtrack. There were sci-fi movie samples, as well, to add to the cosmic feel, including the unavoidable Event Horizon samples (Though, to Implant's credit, they were not the most recognizable quotes.) Yet, after track one, it felt as though I was hearing the same song over and over again. It wasn't a bad song, but it wasn't that great, either. I perked up a bit on "Flash," a fast-paced piece of EBM, but found the "Frequency" interludes either silly or repetitive. The second disc, despite being entirely remixed by other artists, was more of the same, so much in fact that I at first thought my CD changer was broken. This is a bad sign - no song on *U.F.F.* left an impression. There were admirable remixes, most notably from the newly-signed-to-Flatline Spies, playing up a more tribal rhythm, Razed in Black and Ammo. [Theresa]

Inertia Advanced Revelation



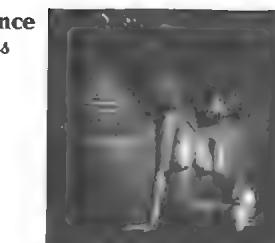
Contact:
Cryonica Music
P.O. Box 24879
London, E13 0QN
U.K.

The British duo, Reza Udhin and Alexys B, are back with the follow-up to their lukewarm EP *Positive Angel*. Inertia's sound has now evolved into a power-packed, well orchestrated body of crisp, clear and highly danceable songs. Label mate Romell Regulacion form the Hawaiian industrial rock band Razed in Black joins them with is guitar solos on the tracks "Gravity" and "Victims." Surprisingly, the guitars work extremely well with the pounding industrial beats and these two songs mark some of the high points of the album. The single "No Defect," although it is one of the most radio-friendly of the tracks, is not necessarily the best song, "Gravity," "Void,"

Sonic Reviews

"Porno Girl," "Obsession" and "Fly" are all extremely well-crafted tracks which could easily support singles or even EPs. "Fly" is a Traci Lords cover which shows off Alexys' superb vocal stylings. The vocal effects used throughout the album, although reminiscent of Cher's "Believe" and at times a bit monotonous, add some variety to the lyrics and are in general carried out very well. For those who like pounding industrial bass, and aggressive male and melodic female vocals, this album should be on your list. [Nick Garland]

In Strict Confidence Mistrust The Angels



Contact:
Minuswe.t (Metropolis U.S.)
Postfach 1246
64745 Breuberg
Germany

One of the last great bands to come off of the late Zoth Ommog label, In Strict Confidence has a lot in common with its former labelmates, especially X Marks the Pedwalk. Dennis Ostermann's vocals are warm and expressive, alternating between distorted growls and a rich croon, adding a humble, human touch to the slick electro-work. A haunting album from the onset, *Mistrust the Angels* provides gentle and abrasive rhythms, some geared towards the dancefloor- "Herzattacke" and its seeming companion piece "Lost in the Night" - and others sustain the despairing mood, as the instrumental "Schlect Geträumt" and the sultry "When the Heart Starts to Bleed" do. The French and German songs, sometimes coupled with the lilting voice of Nadine Stelzer, give the album an operatic feel, especially on the sultry "Der Vampir und Dessen Verwandlung." Built around the classic imagery of fallen angels, broken hearts, and shadow, in strict confidence delivers something dark and beautiful with this latest release. Their technical ability has matured, too, and is at its most original on the slower tracks. Fans of L'ame Immortelle and like-minded bands will not be disappointed with what should be considered one of the top releases of 2002. [Theresa]

David Din of Din_fiv and Tyler Newman of Battery Cage combine their electro skills on the latest effort from the Boston-based band, Informatik's first album in four years. Highly danceable electro-synth reminiscent of latter-day Evil's Toy (Toy? T.O.Y.? Whatever they're named this month), that is also a pleasure to just sit back and listen to. Like a more contemporary *Pretty Hate Machine*, these are love songs for the lovelorn. But thankfully, Din's croon is never whiny and his lyrics manage to avoid clichés, even though there's only so much new to say about bad breakups. Towards the end of the album, the tone reveals some hope for future relationships and even shows a lighter side on "Built For Pleasure," an upbeat song about a sexpot. At least I hope it wasn't meant to be taken seriously. Also of note is the sexy, buzzing Negative Format remix of "Perfect Stranger." Hopefully, Informatik won't make us wait so long for another new album. [Theresa]

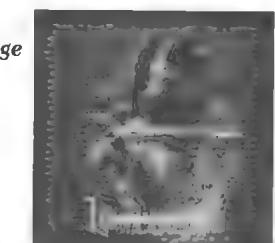
In Strict Confidence The Truth Inside of Me



Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

After many years of absence in the United States, German elektro pioneers In Strict Confidence finally found their home at the American label WTII. The "Herzattacke" single is the first from the upcoming album *Mistrust the Angels*. It contains the single and extended versions; remixes by Olaf Wollschläger, Clan of Xymox and Front Line Assembly, as well as three new songs. "Herzattacke" is an upbeat, lively and aggressive song in German with catchy synth lines and gruff vocals provided by lead singer Dennis Ostermann. All of the remixes at times seem a bit too similar to the original, but because the original is so good, you may not notice that deficiency. The ambient intro of "Into Ashes" with door swinging effects, crashing sounds and a screaming woman lead into a relatively fast-paced ballad in English with interesting synth loops and pounding bass. This is most assuredly a great teaser to their soon-to-be-released album due out in September on Metropolis. [Nick Garland]

Iszoloscope Coagulating Wreckage



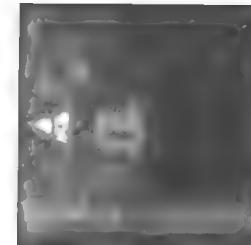
Iszoloscope is conceived as an "audio portrait of the effects of isolation on judgment, mental health, interpersonal values and anger on a human being." A stark instrumental cyberscape like A Split Second sans guitar riffs, choruses and bonus beats. The

Iszoloscope project started in 1999 but in 2001, partner François Bénard left. Continuing alone, Yann Faussurier has realized his concept with an influential label. With some help from Herman of Ah Camasotz, Iszo came into the Spectre stable.

Coagulating Wreckage starts with pulsating sweeps in the title track aligned with hollow sounds. As we continue on the full length disc, a few samples dropped in during quieter moments as things build to aggro harsher beats. "Deimos II" ends in shreiks of terror. The industrial clanging hammer repeats in "Crimson Road." The structure of this disc is covered by a layer of bubbly fluid static throughout. Think scratching the surface trying to escape.

This project could use a sweeter bottom end but I think it would then lose its edge. It would be interesting to hear these noisescapes on vinyl. It's easy to recommend *Coagulating Wreckage* to the noise crowd. It's not too broken to enjoy. With the backing of Belgian label Spectre, you'll soon hear new material from Iszo soon. [DJ Bitter]

Informatik Nymphomatik



Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

This disc is Ivory Frequency's debut release, and it seems to be a good preview of things to come from this synthpop/futurepop band. All the electro (or is it elektro?) elements one would expect from a synthpop band are in here: strong keyboard and synthesizer work, catchy beats, and distorted vocals. There is a strange sense of humor evident in the disc as well. The most danceable tunes on the disc are "Dancing Troops" and "Today"; both are catchy, beat-heavy-but-not-quite-EBM tracks with excellent keyboard work almost reminiscent of some early rave music, or perhaps reminiscent of VNV Nation's "instrumental" pieces. It's difficult to highlight just one or two tracks, because they're all excellent. [Brian Clarkson]

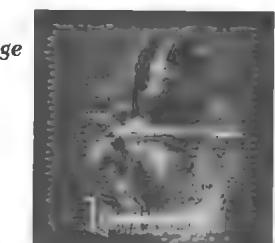
In Strict Confidence Herzattacke



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Ivory Frequency Plug In



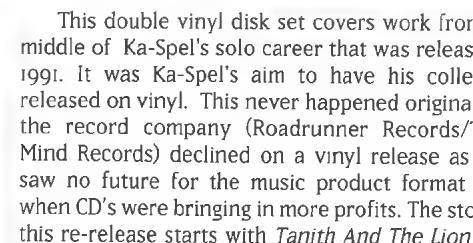
Contact:
Dependent
P.O. Box 200 631
45841 Gelsenkirchen
Germany

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Edward Ka-Spel Tanith and the Lion Tree

Contact:
Flesh Eating Ants Records
1672 Earle Street
Victoria, British Columbia
V8S 1N5
Canada

This double vinyl disk set covers work from the middle of Ka-Spel's solo career that was released in 1991. It was Ka-Spel's aim to have his collection released on vinyl. This never happened originally as the record company (Roadrunner Records/Third Mind Records) declined on a vinyl release as they saw no future for the music product format back when CD's were bringing in more profits. The story of this re-release starts with *Tanith And The Lion Tree* being a favorite of upstart Flesh Eating Ants Records exec Brad. He enjoyed the CD so much he went further to help realize it to its intended vinyl format. The shear weight of this platter is awesome at 220g and gray in colour. Extra points for the direct metal mastering and manufacturing quality of this double



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set. It's limited to 512 hand numbered copies.

The original album has been remastered and mildly reworked by Ka-Spel himself to better suit the vinyl format. Included are the original CD bonus tracks "Phoney War" and "Old Man Trouble" that were recorded when the USAs Gulf War was raging in the early 1990's. Exclusive material on disk 2 are recordings done by Ka-Spel on September 11, 12 and 13, 2001. Seems fitting to have these 5 songs together with similar inspiration after 10 years. Diary (11th to 13th) seem to have no beginning or end as you'll find the mellifluous platter spinning quietly to realize it's over. The slow waves and fades feel magical yet somber in mood. Whether it be for fan, collectors, vinyl junkies or first time explorists, *Tanith and the Lion Tree* can be enjoyed for many reasons. This instant collectable limited set can only be bought direct from their website at flesheatingants.com at this time via mail order. [DJ Bitter]

cEvin Key The Ghost of Each Room

Contact:
Subconscious Studios
10061 Riverside Drive #759
Toluca Lake, CA 91602
U.S.

A very polarized situation in deciding whether *Ghost of Each Room* is better than *Download's Furnace* or *Eyes of Stanley Pain* as Key's best post Skinny Puppy material. This is the second in the Metropolis solo trilogy by cEvin Key. While Key is only solo on tracks "Aphasia," "Klora" and "cccc," he's able to use some old and new friends on this collection. Collaborators include Frankie "Pet" Verschuren, Edward Ka-Spel, Phil Western, Omar



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Torres, Bill Van Rooy, Justin Bennett, Kent Clelland, Saki Kaskas, Martyn deKleer, Silverman, Ryan Moore and K.Tokoi with Skinny Puppy front man Ogre and Ken "Hiwatt" Marshall on "Frozen Sky."

Recorded in California, Jamaica and Holland, this collection has broken samples and Jamaican rhythms with electronic song structures and smatterings of Dub effect. The material continues to draw from Key's experiences at Jamaica's Haunted Rose Hall. The artwork is derived from his stay at the mansion. This is the reason for the eerie Duppy feel. The sound stylings of cEvin Key's vision of music won't make typical radio play but works on the brain and soul of the listener at the same time.

These tracks meld better than the earlier "Music of Cats" offering. Track "Tatayama" was originally released as Unknown from M.E. (remix) from the SEGA Sonic Adventure Remix CD with K.Tokoi. Standouts include "cccc," "Aphasia" and the experimental "A Certain Stuuckey" on the mostly instrumental tracklist. Long time icon and collaborator Edward Ka-Spel lends himself to tracks "15th Shade" and "A Certain Stuuckey." Much to the delight of fans, one day vocalist Ogre and Ken Marshall were in the studio with Key to record "Frozen Sky." The beginning of "Frozen Sky" builds up from the period of turmoil prior to Key & Ogre working again. Once it gets going, we see the chemistry still exists and Ogre's vocal style has matured. This track has the making of a single and if the record company realized this would have produced a video for it. "Frozen Sky" was the encore during OhGr's U.S. 2001 tour that Key partook in. A bit of humour is thrown in on track Klora's sampling.

This release is proof that Key is not resting on his laurels. It's easy to leave it on replay. [DJ Bitter]

KMFDM Attak

Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.

My first thought after listening to *Attak* was "Let's go break something." Not that I wouldn't want to anyway. Musically, the year 2002 could really use an attak anyway. It could stand to be torn a new asshole. But that's a matter of personal taste. Anyway, this album displays impeccable and superior production skills as usual or at least since the last seven years KMFDM has been rocking my world. There is a lot going on here all at once yet it is not too busy or experimental or messy. *Attak* is quite the healthy work out. Vocals from Dorona and Raymond are in full effect. Deep, heart felt and perverted. *Attak* breaks it down with damn intelligent advice to listeners. "If it feels this good then it can't be wrong" claims the lyrics to "Risen."

"Superhero" is positively flawless and I would kill for it on vinyl. Every time I hear it, I simply can't get over how much it rules. Imagine KMFDM + drum 'n' bass + kick ass chick vocals. The lyrics are smart ass and cynical in the best way ever.

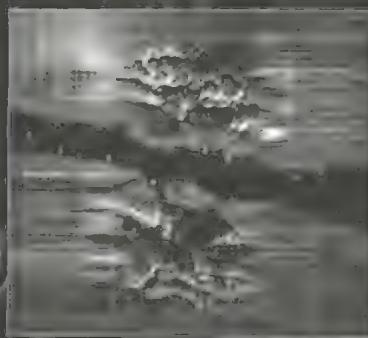
"Save Me" sounds like an industrial version of Winger according to my best friend during a road trip while cranking the power ballad. A hilarious comparison if anything but nothing more. However, I won't deny that this would be a track to bust your lighter out to at a show. As rebels for any causes, we can probably all relate to this. We can all understand "You don't understand."

Attak closes with "Sleep" demanding "Do as I say



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Minus Habens Records (founded by Ivan Iusco in 1987) celebrates its 15th anniversary publishing 'Fractured Reality' a unique compilation including great international special guests: Brian Eno, Depeche Mode, Laurent Garnier, Susumu Yokota, Metamatics, Dark Globe, A. Bigazzi, Hector Zazou, William Orbit and Fabio & Ugo (ribbon fake Atom). It also includes the new Minus Habens roster: Visions Of Excess (Paul Browsay ex-Clock DVA + Nitro K. Fischer), Pankow, Edmond, Red Sector A, It, Denny Almonde, Screech, Nightmare Lodge and Tene Without Flow. The new digital milestone

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and never question what I do." A wonderful soundtrack to angry thoughts, murder plots and crime scenes. Perfect combatative electronic music to rock out with your cock out to. I'm dead serious. You should try it. Really. [DJ Mama Ci]

Kompressor
Crush Television



Contact:
Kompressor Music
P.O. Box 19218
Cincinnati, OH 45219
U.S.

Ladytron
Light & Magic



Contact:
Emperor Norton
102 Robinson Street
Los Angeles CA 90026
U.S.

After listening to this release over and over and over again, I have come to this conclusion: Kompressor, is to EBM what "Weird" Al Yanchovich is to pop music. Quite hilarious!! Kompressor (whose alter ego is this mentally divergent German freak who lives in Ohio and goes by the name of Andreas K) is quite possibly one of the funniest geniuses to hit the EBM scene in a long time. *Crush Television* is remarkably funny and the music on it is pretty good too. You can tell he has tons of free time on his hands (and these days, with this economy, who doesn't?!)! And what he does with that time is simply amazing. I first heard Kompressor a little over a year and a half ago, with the classic underground, wannabe EBM/Rap hit "Kompressor Does Not Dance." I have been a devout fan of his wacky shenanigans that assault electronic music ever since. The music and beats are quite simplistic (almost as if he were playing it on a Fisher-Price "My First EBM Kit" or something), even a little bit on the kitschy side. But what

makes Kompressor the complete and utter joy to listen to is that there is this thick, prominent German accent and his lyrics which slaughter the English language with its lack of the use of plurals and simple conjunction's like the word "the." The song "Do Not Play With Fire" is a good example of that. "If you catch on fire/is to remember most/drop and roll around on ground/or you will turn to toast!" Really funny stuff. Other greats on the album include:

"Vitamins Are Good," "Rappers We Crush" (featuring MC FRONT-A LOT - which is actually a pretty decent rap song with funny lyrics like "What did I do to deserve this?/ What was my crime?/ Was it because I sampled Die Toten Hosen that one time?") "Fist of Fear,"

"You Get Salmonella," "You Need Words" and "Brush Your Teeth."

The only songs on the album that I didn't really care

for were his cover of "The Girl From Imparneia"

(which was absolutely horrendous, to say the least)

and the last track "If I Was a Rabbit." You'd think,

given my name, that I'd enjoy a song praising rabbit's, but think again. The lyrics made less sense than anything else on the album. "If I was a rabbit/I would roll." What's that all about? You tell me, because Kompressor has me stumped! But when it all comes down to brass tacks, for whatever it's worth, I highly recommend it for all you lovers of kitsch out there. It's quite refreshing to hear an EBM artist making fun of EBM. And for all you DJs out there, the CD makes for not only for good, simplistic EBM but also for its sheer comedic value. [Rabbit von Hasenpfucker, Esq.]

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(Sisters of Mercy), the frivolous and trite nature of this collection of lyrics make *Aura* simply unbearable and pure cliché. The Playground Recordings Collector's Limited Edition offers a bonus CD and some multimedia video clips which might be nice for fans, and the packaging is gorgeous. It's just too bad it has to encase such a crap pile of music. [Jon VanWieren]

Mlada Fronta *Oxydes + Remixes*

Contact:
Parametric
9 Rue Du Palais De Justice
0630 Grasse
France



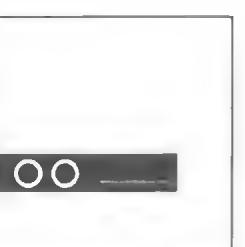
Sometimes while knee-deep in the 'industrial/experimental/ambient/noise' listening experience I get the distinct feeling that I'm not really hearing 'songs'. The tracks may be named and listed like 'songs', but they're not really 'songs' in the sense that the word 'song' implies some sort of planning or structure on the part of the artist. In fact, it seems like most of the time what I'm really hearing are the best trimmed out sections of time from endless studio jams that contain nothing else anyone would want to hear.

Mlada Fronta's *Oxydes* is the exact opposite of this. At first glance *Oxydes* looks pretty much like a compilation of crap from Mlada's secret basement tapes, but one listen will change your mind. This album was not only carefully preconceived, but executed in a way that paints a very specific sonic picture for the listener. On each track Remy Pelleschi (the single human force behind Mlada Fronta) builds a thick nest of feedback, floaty pads, white noise, ghostly voices, and spacecraft sounds (yes, I mean ACTUAL spacecraft/hovercraft sci-fi fx here!) before blowing your speakers the fuck up with some of the loudest, most distorted breakbeats to be heard on the planet. Seriously, these beats get so fuzzy they pretty much cease to be drum sounds and end up being just little snippets of noise. My favorite tracks are "Uo" and "H2o," the latter of which misleads you with about 3:30 of spooky background sounds before dropping the heavy, HEAVY shit right on top of your head.

Oxydes is awesome and considering that this CD is actually a sick two-disc set with remixes and 4 videos it makes for a pretty good purchase for my money. [Seth]

Mnemonic *Identifikationsstörung*

Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue Charles Degroux
1040 Brussels
Belgium



According to Babelfish, German duo Mnemonic's debut album, titled *Identifikationsstörung*, roughly translates to "identification disturbance." This is a somewhat fitting description for Mnemonic, as *Identifikationsstörung* plays like members Sebastian Schulz and Michael Belletz couldn't decide whether they wanted to make an impressively sequenced EBM record or an aggressive ambient disc. What's

interesting about *Identifikationsstörung* is the fact that Mnemonic manages to do both without sounding schizophrenic. *Identifikationsstörung* starts out with a few Evil's Toy-esque EBM cuts that soon mutate into distorted breakbeat-laden tracks overlaid with lush, atmospheric melodies. Throughout the course of *Identifikationsstörung* Mnemonic frequently shifts between the two styles, yet does it so seamlessly that it hardly seems like they've stylistically switched gears. Remixes from Somatic Responses, Ammo, and Implant round out this release. The limited edition boxset also includes additional tracks, demo versions, and further remixes from God Module and Razed in Black, well worth the additional \$7 (postage paid!) if your are ordering it direct from Alfa Matrix. Recommended. [Kyonifive]

Monolith *Labyrinth*

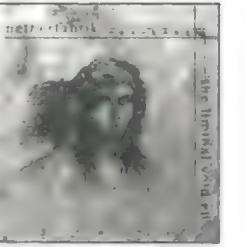
Contact:
Dafit Records
P.O. Box 46
9120 Beveren
Belgium



Eric van Wonterghem has been making music since the early 80's, when he was a member of Absolute Body Control. Later on he also joined Insekt and founded Sonar with Dirk Ivens of Dive/Klinik fame. This release is Monolith's fourth offering and shows the efforts of a musician who knows his shit. Alternating between unrelenting rhythms and desolate soundscapes, the album is an innovative combination of drum n' noise. Vocals are very sparse and distant, sometimes with a hint of Middle Eastern flair as on "Eternity" and the bonus (though why it is listed separately from the other songs is unclear) track "Disco Buddha," tinging the album with a tribal feel. The centerpiece of the album is "Memories of Sound," a two-part piece starting off with a creepy mechanical pulse that bleeds seamlessly into driving clangs and piston hisses. All in all, as the album comes to a close, it feels as if it has come full circle, a well-crafted, moody journey worth taking for those who appreciate their infectious beats blended with thought-provoking atmospherics. [Theresa]

Netherfabrik *The Liminal Void*

Contact:
Netherfabrik c/o Joshua Fielstra
1132A E Kane Pl
Milwaukee, WI 53502
US



This is probably my favorite demo of the year! If the guys keep this quality up, they have to go far! Track 1 is an intro track, bringing you up gently from silence into an uplifting piece of beauty, and it gets the CD off to a wonderful start. But then he must know just how great it sounds, and has to screw with you, and just kills the track midway with a solid 5-second tone. It works brilliantly, jarringly reminds you we're not here to hear beautiful soundscapes, no matter how good they are. It says let's start the dance tracks, and it works great! Track 2 is a great EBM dance track ala FLA Hard Wired, but a little catchier. Track 3 is basically D-Ranged (early Paracont) meets Outremer (early VNV). One of my

favorite tracks! Track 4 has some of that, but with more of trance feel to it, plus a sweet technoid element thrown in. My other favorite track! I've had tracks 3 & 4 on repeat most of the night! Track 5 is a bit strange, but that's part of what makes it very cool. At times it feels just like Orbital, sometimes a little more aggressive, but then the vocals sound straight out of Death In June?! Anyway, it's a neat track, too, often very catchy as well! [Sarin]

Neuroticfish *Les Chansons Neurotiques*

Contact:
Dancing Ferret
4906 Monument Road
Philadelphia, PA 19131
US



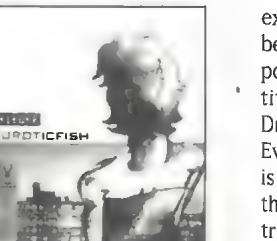
Germany's Sascha Mario Klein is the mastermind behind Neuroticfish; a band name likely to grow on EBM fans worldwide following the release of *Les Chansons Neurotiques*. Neuroticfish has been active since first spawning in 1999, but it is *Les Chansons Neurotiques* that has jettisoned this fish out of water. The depth and quality of this release has Neuroticfish swimming in the same tank as genre leaders such as Apoptygma Berzerk, Mesh, Covenant, and Icon of Coil.

The songs from *Les Chansons Neurotiques* have in common emotive melodies and Sascha's powerful voice. Intimate in nature, this album takes a more personal approach than say bands like Haujobb, VNV Nation, or Front Line Assembly who have a more epic style. Other than perhaps "Reinvent the Pain," there aren't really any songs that standout. The songs of this release are similar in form and content, which would be a knock on the band if the songs weren't all so good! A provocative sample stating: "EBM is dead" is said to be found on all Neuroticfish albums, as it is here. The irony being that strong releases like *Les Chansons Neurotiques* will only keep EBM alive, and far from the assistance of any life support systems.

Orientated toward the dance floor, this album is certain to shake your tail fin. Arguably, this release fits well within the 'future pop' category. But don't let Mr. Klein here you say that, he hates the label, stating in a recent interview: "I am NOT a future pop band." Well, however you slice it, this Neuroticfish is a keeper! [Jon VanWieren]

Neuroticfish *Prostitute*

Contact:
Strange Ways Records
Grosse Johannisstr 5
20457 Hamburg, FRG
Germany



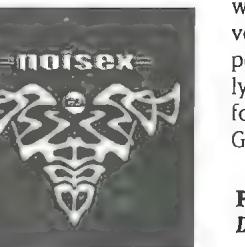
Another catchy single from the band that packed dancefloors with the club-hit "Velocity." Sascha Mario Klein has a smooth vocal style that complements the EBM-influenced beats and synth overtures. Not too sweet, not too aggressive, but the best of both synthpop and EBM, particularly on the "NYC Club Edit" version which has been in heavy rotation in the Northeast. Chances are, post-listening, you will find yourself humming these infectious melodies at random. It's hard to forget a name like Neuroticfish, and with their second eagerly-awaited

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album just released, you're sure to be hearing that name a lot more often in the future. It's well-earned attention. [Theresa]

Noisex *Groupieshock*

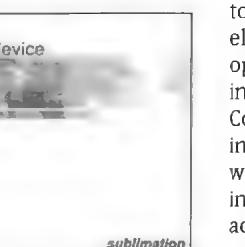
Contact:
Flatline Records
P.O. Box 11
84088 Neufahrn
Germany



Groupieshock is everything a listener has come to expect from the Noisex camp. Inorganic, distorted beats, simple loops, aggression: all the elements of powernoise are found here. Standout tracks are the title track "Groupieshock," "Faster," "Industrial Drummer" and "Boys With Toys." The opening Dr. Evil (of Austin Powers fame) on "Industrial Drummer" is hilarious, as are some of the samples riddled through "Boys With Toys." There are some mellower tracks on the disc as well, but all still have the same almost trademarked Noisex sound. [Brian Clarkson]

Null Device *Sublimation*

Contact:
Nilaiyah
P.O. Box 82614
Columbus, OH 43202
US



in@ripco.com

If Bronski Beat, New Order and Yaz all got together and mated, their musical child would most likely be Null Device. Many years after meeting at the University of Wisconsin and subsequent musical cooperation, the masterminds behind Null Device, Eric Oehler and Eric Goedken, bring us their first label release. Their music builds on the previous success of their MP3.com presence and on excellent remixes and production for Stromkern. Most of the album consists of melancholy dirges punctuated by a few moments of upbeat and slightly danceable tracks. The song "Word and Deed" with its Indian flavor courtesy of a tabla drum loop and strong, emotional vocals is the best song on the album. *Sublimation* is steeped with elements that without which, would normally make a synthpop album clonal and boring. "Sacré Coeur" is a song which takes us on a journey to Paris with its lyrics "Leaves fall by the riverside blown through the city of lights," and conjures up memories of lost love with its chorus. A special treat on the album is a cover version of The Smith's "There is a Light," which provides a new revision of an old favorite, the vocals to which are eerily similar to the original. Null Device is very different from all other synthpop acts and are poised to take the scene by storm with their superb lyricism, programming and vocals. "Synthetic music for synthetic people," but with soul and style. [Nick Garland]



The final sonic excursion by Scott Sturgis's Pain Station is a gnarled, electronically kneaded masterpiece of tortured synths plodding through Sturgis's gray matter wasteland. It's as if an electronic grid has been draped over Sturgis's skull and we are allowed to listen to the scarred discharges writhing within, an elastic topography of misery and pain. This elasticity opens the disc, as malleable electronics groan, skating through the desolation, on "Do You Feel It?" Concentrated, slightly processed vocals and stuttering, plodding percussion meld with the electronics, while a drill or some like-minded instrument whirs in the background; later, synths of a stern nature are added to the mix. "Tell Me What You Want" is the sound of mental attrition, the rhythm, sluggish like a

brown calliope, lunacy rising to the top. Everything sounds squished, drugged, as though it's being dragged through muddy gray matter mush and put on display via the ground gruel sounds. Only an interlude of twisted, moaning metal deviates from the sick-hop stylings. Something is wrong here, and we are witness to the unraveling. Even the more melodic synth lines cannot mask the essence of one falling apart. Upbeat percussion creates an energized diversion during "Taint," only to be reminded of where we are by the same crusted in radioactive contamination vocals. The fried electronic haze of the title track gurgles merrily along amidst a foot dragging beat and moist, thickly popping bubbles. Synths hint at melodic direction without truly engaging it until the end approaches. As a follow up to my fave disc from 2000, *Cold, Dead Is Dead* is another masterpiece of cheerless mental dislocation and terminal despair, and further evidence that Sturgis is one of our most talented sonic engineers. [JC Smith]

Paralysed Age *Into the Ice*

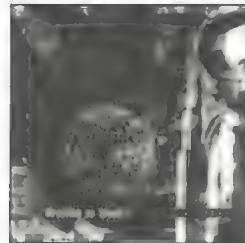
Contact:
Dancing Ferret Discs
526 S. 5th st
Philadelphia, PA 19147
US



The cover of this album is so cool. A cartooned nordic woman is overlooking a black sea wearing a fur cape, fur boots, fishnets and a leotard with boobs to die for. It's so cheesy, I love it!! So I figured it would sound cheesy. But it's actually not bad. It is Goth Metal. No wait, it's Goth Heavy Metal. NOT to be confused with Goth Black Metal. It's great! no one has really done Goth Heavy Metal before. (Think Christian Death meets Ratt). I'm into it. [Lisa Swiss]

Genesis P-Orridge/ Z'ev *Direction ov Travel*

Contact:
Cold Spring Records
8 Wellspring
Blisworth, Northants
NN7 3EH, England
UK



This collaboration between industrial music pioneer Genesis P-Orridge and master atmosphere creator Z'ev is nothing short of brilliant. The two work with Tibetan bowls and bells, some drums, and some programming/mixing to create a work clearly intended as a backdrop for mediation and metaphysical travel. Each track is named after a compass point to highlight the theme laid out by the title. None of the tracks become intrusive since that would defeat the purpose of providing a soundtrack for an inner journey. The insert for the disc includes a small essay by Z'ev on trance and transformation from various philosophical, metaphysical and psychological viewpoints. This essay provides both good background material for the initiated and a good launching point for the novice. Psychonauts everywhere who enjoy a mellow musical accompaniment will love this album as I do. [Brian Clarkson]

Plastic Assault We Score!



Contact:
Bloodline
Postfach 361
4146 Nuess
Germany

real instrument. Psyche's Darrin has never been afraid to express his appreciation of music by playing covers. Here we find "Goodbye Horses," "Suicide's Che" and Soft Cell's "Sex Dwarf." Psyche is now enjoying steady North American distribution with Art of Fact and the inclusion of this bonus disc shows their commitment. [DJ Bitter]

Psyche Endangered Species



Contact:
Artofact Records
1057 Steeles Ave. W.
P.O. Box 81630
Toronto, Ontario M2R 3X1
Canada

Endangered Species is a full length remix album including four new tracks. It includes remix and production work by Wonderchild, Fast Cars, Sixty Winters, Massiv in Mensch and Electrohandel. In North America, Art of Fact have released the album with different artwork from euro label Accession. With the addition of Remi Szyszka as sound technician, Psyche's sound now has fuller driving synth beats. This is exemplified by the remix treatments by the other musicians. Of the 12, dancetrack standouts include "Renegades," "The Hiding Place," "Momento," "The Beyond" and "Goodbye Horses." While the addition of fluttery bleeps might not be enjoyed by all, the synth dance crowd surely will.

Just a note about the bonus CD "Misguided Angels" included in this package, 16 earlier tracks rare, remixed or in demo form to complete one's Psyche collection. This CD has strong tracks like "Brain Collapses," "Unveiling the Secret," "Goodbye Horses" and "Sex Dwarf." Also on the Disc is an early demo of "Torture" featuring Dwayne Goettl (former Skinny Puppy keyboardist) who was a member of this band with the Huss brothers before they changed their name to Psyche. It's evident on this disc how much Psyche's sound has changed from the barren Casio style synths where voice seems to be the only

ways is brilliant, bordering on genius! When they're on and cooking, they have few weaknesses. In general, it could use a little more melody, but every once in a while the melody is as strong as anybody else's. Also the slow tracks tend to drone on and be a bit uninteresting. Anyway, enough talk - the bottom line is this is an essential purchase this year, so go get it now! [Sarin]

Psycho Bitch Eden



Contact:
Dark Dimensions:
Frank D'Angelo
Werzlarer Str.9
35630 Ehringshausen
Germany

This is a project by the people behind Hands Productions band SINA, who also help out on Hands band Mono No Aware's debut, but despite the Hands connections this came out on Pro Noize. They have also released a single as Psycho Bitch, which was decent, but this album is significantly better. In general the music is not miles from the SINA material, but overall it's not very similar to Mono No Aware. It incorporates such strong EBM, trance, and dnb elements into an overall power noise feel that it's really something in between. It should appeal strongest to rhythmic noise fans who also like EBM and/or EBM fans who are looking for something a bit harder or different. At the club, even many people who ordinarily don't like or even hate power noise but like elektro or EBM have reacted extremely favorably to this - "I could really get into it if most power noise was like this" is a common comment. The music is top-notch, well put together, constantly changing,

uses a wide variety of awesome sounds, but is still crunchy and noisy too. Sina's vocals are present on most of the tracks, and always improve them, even when the music is already superb. I think she is my favorite female vocalist performing today, period. I was always a big fan of 99 Kowalski on Front 242's *Evil Off*, and Sina is at least as good, or probably better. But if you've heard 99 Kowalski, you get the basic idea, except Sina is a little more subdued and much more spoken-word than sung. It's difficult to compare Psycho Bitch to other acts, because overall they don't quite sound like any, and yet it's clear they are somewhere between EBM and power noise, with sometimes strong elements from the techno world. With so many styles and sounds going off, it's amazing it's as cohesive and brilliant as it is.

Track 6 is probably my favorite on the disc, and it was also released as a single after this album came out. Tracks 1-2 and 4-7 are also awesome. I'd most recommend tracks 2, 5, 6, and 9 for the dancefloor. The beats are relentless and yet extremely catchy. The use of original sounds and their combination in original

ways is brilliant, bordering on genius! When they're on and cooking, they have few weaknesses. In general, it could use a little more melody, but every once in a while the melody is as strong as anybody else's. Also the slow tracks tend to drone on and be a bit uninteresting. Anyway, enough talk - the bottom line is this is an essential purchase this year, so go get it now! [Sarin]

Reversal Penetrations Cut up Violation

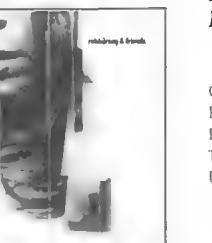


Contact:
COP international
981 Aileen Street
Oakland, CA, 94608
U.S.

The first thing that strikes someone upon seeing the cover art for this album, which consists of digitally stylized images of protesters at a G8 summit being cornered by police, is that immediate and obvious impression of a very politically conscious and politically motivated band. Musically, this turns out to be quite true, and in an intelligent and thoughtful manner. Move over Snog, here has come a band that can actually take politics seriously, and with far more interesting soundscapes. Musically speaking very interesting waveforms are used, giving a feel of a sort of ambient EBM, going back and forth between industrial's speed and atmospheric minimalism, sometimes simultaneously, but with no vocals used, only vocal samples... and quite interesting samples. Even the tracks which are less interesting musically are often quite fascinating purely for the didactic sound collage which layers back and forth over the

air, wonderfully distressing synthesizers mood and the sometimes minimalist sometimes very hard and danceable drum patterns. Only one complaint arises on this album, namely that some tracks have a preponderance of German rather than English samples, making understanding of their political message unfortunately more difficult. Overall, however, an absolutely genius album, especially for those into radical critique and questioning of politics and modern society (and well versed in the German language). [Robert Bisno]

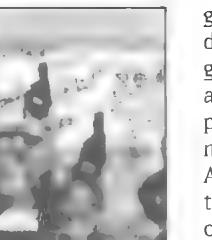
Rob (u) Rang and Friends S/T



Contact:
Ant-Zen
P.O. Box 1257
93135 Lappersdorf
Germany

This humble reviewer still can't always draw the line between EBM and IDM, and with releases like this one from rob(u)rang, the line only gets fuzzier. There are seven tracks, all with an obsession with a driving (though not necessarily pounding) beat. The disc opens with an inorganic set of beats reminiscent of African tribal drumming, but only gets weird from there. There aren't really any vocals to note, just distorted loops of vocal fragments that start sounding like one sentence and end up sounding like another one entirely – even though the words used are all the same. Funky distortion on top of strong beats really characterize this offering. [Brian Clarkson]

Savak The Taliban Pistol



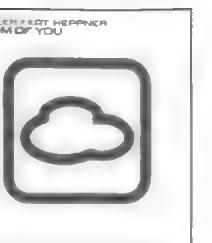
Contact:
Unit Records
1624 Chapin St.
Alameda, CA 94501
U.S.

Savak is Scott Beebe, founder of Possessive Blindfold Records and one half of Holocaust Theory. Named after the Shah of Iran's secret police during the 1970's, Savak made its debut with the album *44 days*, a politically-minded power electronics experiment. His EP is an extension of that theme, this time examining the roots of terrorism found under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, whose methods of governing are all-too familiar to anyone who has watched CNN in the last year. And while Beebe's liner notes discuss Bin Laden, it is made explicitly clear that Savak "does not support terrorism nor does it support counter-terrorism tactics." (Dubya is listed under the "no thanks to" section alongside Al Qaeda).

The album is also dedicated to the victim's of 9-11 and their families, with proceeds from the sales of this record going to charities that help victim's families. But enough about politics – strip away the liner notes and song titles, and all that's left is the music, which is strong enough to stand separately from the subject matter. The chilling opening track "A Warning To All" guides listeners into the simple, beautifully ambient "The Faceless Enemy." The first half of the EP builds up energetic rhythms slowly, with a tense, minimalist style that digs under one's skin and becomes unsettling, especially on "Regime

"in Tension" and the title track, which makes use of a sitar. The second half of *The Taliban Pistol* is comprised of five remixes, four of which are tracks from *44 days*. The thrumming DJ Tron mix of "inside the mind v2" is noteworthy, as are the punchy explicit and atmospheric synapscape contributions. The original and remixed works combine to make this a unique listening experience, full of desolation, power, tension and, ultimately, timeliness. [Theresa]

Schiller mit Heppner Dream of You



Contact:
Radikal Records
P.O. Box 186
Teaneck NJ 07666
U.S.

Let's be honest – the overwhelming majority of Industrialnation readers who purchase this disc will be hiding it under their beds with their Erasure records while purporting not to listen to that 'effeminate crap.' With that in mind, we promise we won't tell anyone that you are actually reading this review. *Dream of You* is an 8 track CD featuring the title track and seven remixes. The Schiller part of the equation, German techno scientists Mirko von Schlieffen and Christopher von Deylen, have been serving up deep trance cuts since the late nineties. The Heppner part, of course, is Wolfsheim vocalist Peter Heppner, who lends his trademark voice to what proves to be a very languid but exceptionally danceable track with the words 'club hit' written all over it. Do not be mistaken; this is not the brand of elektro-electronica crossover which conjures up images of lace-clad goths wielding glowsticks. Rather this is the type of dancefloor track that is mellow-yet-fun enough to get the club chicks in PVC gyrating their vinyl-clad asses in come-hither swishes. If that's not a selling point then I don't know what is. Of the remixes, none match the strength of the original mix, although the Ayla Remix – which retains the original's dreamy tone while upping the bpm's a few notches – comes close. And if the original wasn't dreamy enough, the 11-minute Chillout Remix will send you literally dreaming by the eighth minute. In all, Schiller mit Heppner's "Dream of You" CD is a recommended low-key, groove-worthy dance cut. Now all you have to figure out is how to get out of the record store without anyone seeing what you bought. [Kyronfive]

Seabound No Sleep Demon

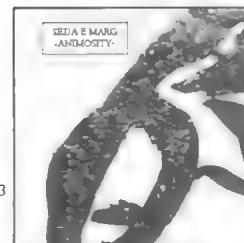


Contact:
Dependent
P.O. Box 200 631
45841 Geisenkirchen
Germany

Seabound's debut album, *No Sleep Demon*, is what happened when Dependent Records' Stefan Herwig let Futurepop's little nephew out to play. Seabound's Martin Vorbrodt and Frank Spinath are not, in fact, the genetic missing links between Ronan Harris and Eskil Simonsson, but they aren't miles away either. Despite comparisons, Seabound should be judged on its own merits, not it's better known family members. *No Sleep Demon* is a fairly sophisticated first record. Tracks like "Traveling" and

"Avalost" are superbly structured (and it's no mistake on "Travelling," Simonsson himself produced this track) with vocals that are executed by Spinath's beautiful and, if truth were told, damn sexy voice. Lyrically, *No Sleep Demon* contains a surprising level of depth and maturity. Spinath manages to plant a striking image or thought-provoking line into the dense lyrical folds of each of Seabound's songs. Sure, *No Sleep Demon* has its occasional freshman wobble, but, overall, the intelligence and simple catchiness of each of these ten tracks manages to win out. I'm hooked... no pun intended. [Kyronfive]

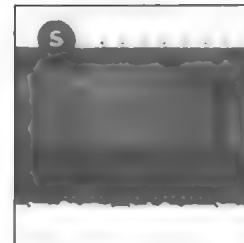
Seda E Marg Animosity



Contact:
Mechanoise Labs
5 Rue du Pont-aux-choux 75003
Paris
France

So you really thought them Ant-Zen crew were the most terrorist rhythm activists one could find? Maybe you thought their stuff was 'oh-so brutal.' Go ahead and send the children to bed because we're gonna talk about being brutal with Mechanoise Labs. Compared to this, Thunderdome-style hardcore techno (or the whole tribe of industrial-strength techno or whatever silly name it's called again) is as brutal as Kylie Minogue's latest single, and they're not naked in their videoclips, and this still makes them (a little) more valuable than the cocaine-driven pop star. Don't get me wrong, though, this is not just another Merzbow-wannabe (now that computers made it so easy, there's not enough room for their records in them huge green plastic rubbish containers down the street). It's good music, but it is harsh good music. You got some quiet moments, but those are LOUD quiet moments. Pretty good. [DDN]

Simulator Embrace The Unknown



Contact:
Cohagen Music
P.O. Box 28293
Oakland, CA 94604
U.S.

This album was such an awesome surprise. Where did this come from? It's hard EBM & trance-influenced dance music with softened edges and irresistible melodies. But it doesn't drone on and on with trite crescendos, etc., like trance songs, but moves like a typical elektro song – i.e. you get what you want out of the song, then move on. That's a good thing! This artist totally gets it. The album's around 1/2-2/3 instrumental, with the male vocals generally like those in synthpop. The vox is nothing like Depeche Mode synthpop – closer to Wolfsheim, plus there is one remix which adds great breathy, babydoll female vocals. This is not future pop – it's got all the dancefloor energy, and a lot of emotion, but it's also very cerebral. You can enjoy this in the background or in the foreground. I don't think I can more highly recommend this album! More than anyone, I'd compare their sound to Decoder-era Noise Unit, which is a huge compliment from me, and furthermore in general the music would have been strong enough to actually be on that album and kept



the quality up. I think this is my favorite album so far this year, and the year's almost done.

My personal favorite track is track 10, but tracks 2-6 and 10-12 are all simply awesome tracks as well, with most of these being extremely clubworthy as well. The rest of the album is good, too, though, don't worry! Looking for some negative points, the vocals could be better, and I'm sure some people would have problems with them, but I liked them as is. More tracks with vocals, if done well, would have been ideal, but they're definitely good enough without. I actually prefer the remixes with lyrics, though. Slightly better production would have been ideal, but it's really fine. More sounds would have been good too, but again it's fine with what it has - I'd rather it as is than mucked with.

A few final random facts, I believe the musician behind Simulator also worked with Lost Signal, but Simulator is far, far better. This is also one of the first releases on the new California label Cohaagen, and with this release they've really put themselves on the map. I like their other releases as well (Ganymede and Fr/action), but this should definitely be their flagship band. But keep an eye on Cohaagen as well! [Sarin]

Sino Promote oo

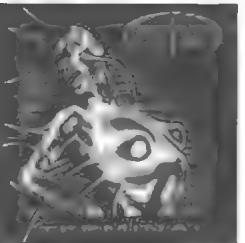


Contact:
Rebuild Projects
Yoshinobu Ikeda
3-17-30-301 Morino
Machichashi, Tokyo
Japan

PROMOTE oo is a Japanese only release from the Tokyo based solo project after the breakup of that originally started in 1997. This six track CD-R EP is their first independent commercial release after 2 earlier demos. SINO (re-build projects) borne in 1999 is an interesting mix of electro noise and guitar fuzzbox feedback instrumental originals that is easy to listen to and danceable. Sino himself plays guitar/programming and electronics/programming by T. Makino. It is now getting distributed worldwide.

"Brain & Mind" is just a short swirl synth piece while "Black Blood & Mad Brain" gets more structured with added guitar, beats and what sounds like a (traditional) Japanese flute. There are no liner notes to reference but I'm sure it's an electronic simulation. Echo is a big part of "Junk Me..." with beating drums. "Downer Beat" gets a bit punchier with similar themes. "Cyber 2999" is quirky programming with the guitar backing that blends in to grinding machinery like noises. The last track, "Sadistic Hyper Love"

SMP Terminal



Contact:
Underground Inc
P.O. Box 16008
Chicago, IL 60616
U.S.

Don't get me wrong, I like SMP a lot. I mean, Terminal was, for me, the best album of 2000. Unfortunately, this is not Terminal. This is, in fact, a "Jason Bazzinet's greatest hits" album, collecting songs from "Terminal" and "Ultimatum," as well as



the mind of Sino, this project does not miss a beat. A new collection is in the works - can't wait. [DJ Bitter]

SMP Hacked

Contact:
Invisible
P.O. Box 16008
Chicago, IL 60616
U.S.

The hard-edged, Hip-Hop infused Industrial group SMP are back. Back with a vengeance. Hacked is a remix album with a more powerful Hip-Hop vibe to it. As a lover of Hip-Hop, EBM and Coldwave, SMP leaves nothing to be desired. The remixes are powerful, demanding and in-your-face. This album was a sheer joy to listen to. It was hard to not bob my head like a homie while listening to this album, and even harder not to just say screw this review and dance to it! This album features 2 remixes of "Chemical," 6 of "September," 2 of "Megaton," 2 of "Born of Science," and one from "Intensity," "Militia Love" and "Topside." All are done by some of EBM and Power NOIZe and TechnoOs best and brightest like Hybrid, Codec, Stromkern, Mindless Faith, and Thine Eyes. The beats are strong, concise, and make you want to "Go Off Like A Megaton!" Favorites on the album include, but are not limited to, "Megaton (Thine Eyes Mix)," "Chemicals (Mindless Faith Mix)" for its EBM induced surge of power, "Chemicals (Doll Factory Mix)" for its intense D+B beats and insane music, "Intensity (Cold Mix)" for its hard core MIDI passion, and "Megaton (Codec Mix)" for its reminder of the B-Boy that's hidden deep inside of this Rivethead's body. Hacked is a pure hard beat driven ride into insanity. What a great album! [Rabbit von Hasenpucker, Esq.]

I honestly love almost every track on the disc, minus 3, 10, and 11. Track 6 is definitely my favorite, for being extremely strong in melody, originality, and rhythm, three areas I care very deeply about. The lyrics aren't so bad, either. I'd say tracks 2, 6, 9, and 12 are the best for the dancefloor.

I'd like it a little more if it were catchy and/or beat-driven a little more often, 'cause it occasionally drags a little, but it's still a marvelous achievement. [Sarin]

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starts with the omnipresent church organ as it progresses into full beaty melodic flight. This is the jewel of the disc.

The Japanese industrial noise scene is not represented or sold much here in North America so Sino's sound is quite fresh considering the many euro clones. Some of the music found here has been included as soundtrack in the PC Game BLOWOUT. From the mind of Sino, this project does not miss a beat. A new collection is in the works - can't wait. [DJ Bitter]

Sonic Dragolgo Don't Stop The Music



Contact:
Klangkrieg Produktionen
Dirschauer Str. 9
10245 Berlin
Germany

Possibly, the most original release of the year. An incredible blend of extremely diverse influences makes something completely unique, and yet despite the experiment, and corresponding risk of failure, it comes together with amazing results. It's like a trashy guitar pop band crashes full steam into a power-noise band, sometimes alternating between them and other times playing them together, and with blasts of janoise thrown in frequently at the right points in the beat. And chase it down with a sweet electro (electro with a c) track at the end. There are some kinks in it, but all things considered they are very few. I wouldn't be surprised if we hear more like this in the future from other bands, and if it's even half as strong as this, it'd be very welcome indeed!

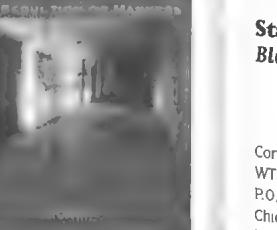
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Sophia The Seduction of Madness

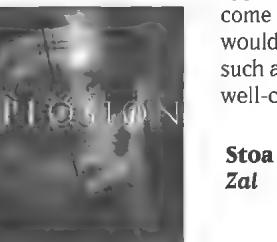
Contact:
Cold Meat Industries
SE-595 41
Mjölby
Sweden

Ever wonder what kind of music those voices in

your head listen to? The Seduction of Madness is a 23-minute jump into the dark world of Sophia. The cover of the album is a picture of an abandoned sanitarium. It's a fitting cover, as this CD would be a fantastic soundtrack for such a place. The music is sometimes minimal, almost quiet, with dissonant keyboards that seem to both calm and unnerve. Other times, gigantic drums explode from nowhere, snare drums echo endlessly against rotting walls. There is a definite sense of classical music to this album, trumpet calls mix with a swirling vortex of choral voices.

The biggest flaw with the disc is its length. After 23 minutes, you feel as if you're ready for a grand climax of the album, and then... silence... it's over. It leaves me hungry for more, which may very well have been the artist's intention. I feel it is too short, but it's a great (and cheap) starting point for newcomers to Sophia. [Rick Kinney]

State of Being Implosion



Contact:
Stateofbeing
P.O. Box 77043
Cleveland, Ohio 44107
U.S.

State of Being steadily progressed over the years from a solo project started by Christopher Foldi in 1989, to a full-fledged band effort with the non-synthetically produced instrumentation seeming to outweigh the synthesizers as of late. On their most recent release, Implosion, the follow-up album to the 1998 EP Static in My Brain, the group continues to fine-tune their electro-darkwave sound. Moving from the classical industrial genre and more towards a modern synth-hybrid, Implosion exhibits a melodic and edgy texture throughout its entirety. Another noteworthy observation is how the album also manages to satisfy fans of the Fields of the Nephilim School of dark balladry on the songs "Rain" and "Awake until Dawn," along with a few other tracks - yet I really wouldn't go as far to call it Goth Rock - since all the selections are rather varied in their structure, and presentation. One really interesting offering is, "Fall," which starts with a very Art of Noise type intro, and moves quickly into a quirky coldwave tune with backing vocals by Shara - Scott's wife, and co-collaborator. (One could also say the

band is a family affair since Scott, Christopher's Brother, and Rayanne, Shara's sister are also in the band.) Finally, the closing remix of the third song "Instinct," "Instinct (Metal and Glass)," is expertly "reconstructed" by Andy Kubiszewski of former Stabbing Westward relations. The remix rocks a really slick organic texture of clinking glass and synthetic tweaking, and is most likely the standout single of the album-kind of like Neubauten on barbiturates. [LucastaSin]

Yet another former IN-writer Ned Kirby comes at us with his project, Stromkern. Since the mid-90s, Ned has been creating music. After listening to Re-align, I see a big future for Stromkern. The Industro-EBM-Jam Rock sound is remarkably well produced, and has extreme potential. The definite power struggle between the EBM beat and the aggressive Killing Joke-esque style lyrical assault makes this a uniquely brilliant release. Having heard so many groups labeled "Hip-Hop Industrial," this moniker usually causes me to cringe in agony. However, in this release, the Hip-Hop influence is executed without the usual cringe-effect. A particularly good example of the well-done Hip-Hop influence is on track #7, "Keeping Time." If Stromkern were a penny stock, I'd



State of the Union Black City Lights

Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

Already signed to Accession Records in Germany, State of the Union has made waves in the German Alternative Charts and have made a name for themselves as a rising talent in the EBM and elektro scenes. Black City Lights is a straightforward elektro album that combines the edginess of industrial with the sensibility and accessibility of synthpop. The title track, with its pounding bass, clanky drums and a synth line that is reminiscent of the X-files theme, calls us all to duty with the line "Send a message, be a leader not a follower." The album is a well-crafted combination of both personal and political messages, signified by samples of presidential speeches in the songs "Citizen" and "Mankind" and these are some of the highlights of the disc. A trance influence can be felt in the song "Vicious Sentiment" with its soothing synth strings, drilling bass and the energetic buildups for a very catchy chorus. Most of the tracks are suitable for the dancefloor, but also appropriate for leisurely home listening. Few artists come along with a debut album from which a single would be difficult to select. State of the Union have such an album -- whereby each track is a remarkably well-crafted song. [Nick Garland]

Stoa Zal



Contact:
Scanner
Wetzlarer Straße
D-35630 Ehringhausen
Germany

My mom liked it!! It soothed her while sitting in my scary living room listening to me rant and rave on how Jack Skellington should be my boyfriend. "Very new agey" she said. "Almost as good as Yanni." I gave it to her. Anyway, Stoa are very talented, classical musicians. The only instruments that are used on this are oboe, harp, piano and cello only. And very pretty female vocals. Good for nice dinner music with the in-laws? Personally, I'd rather put on Christian Death's Only Theatre of Pain at dinnertime but what are you going to do? Decent, if classical Projekt bands float your boat. [Lisa Swiss]

StromkeRN re-align

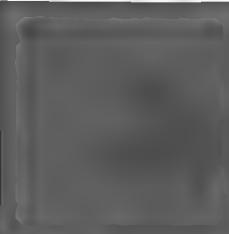


Contact:
WTII Records
P.O. Box 13495
Chicago, IL 60613
U.S.

If you haven't heard yet, the legendary dark-electro-synth act, Evil's Toy, have dropped their evil façade, and are now going as T.O.Y.. According to an earlier press release, their music simply, "no longer evil." As if this wasn't enough, "T.O.Y." isn't just a shortened version of "Evil's Toy," but an acronym for, "Trademark Of Youth." Whatever that means. "Trademark of Selling Out" would be more appropriate. The music is the sort of catchy, homogenized, synth-pop that you would expect a major label to put out. Don't get me wrong, I LOVE synth-pop, but this is uninspiring, emotionally devoid, house music with sappy lyrics and a wee bit of psytrance thrown in. Gone are the snarling, Cobra Commander-like vocals that would suddenly change into something like Destro/Megatron during the chorus. Now, Volker sings like a serious Leonard Nemoy trying very hard to sound like a happy Peter Murphy. It may not be evil, but it is kinda creepy. Every song does have heavy orchestral synth pads running through it, however, they're nowhere near as powerful as the synths used by E.T.. Instead of the synths carrying the harmony of the song, they

sink my whole allowance into it. I'm not only saying that because Ned is a swell guy. [vigigler]

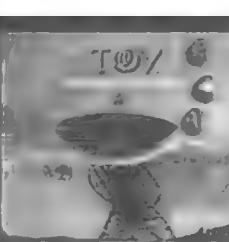
Synapscape Positive Pop



Contact:
Ant-Zen
P.O. Box 1257
93135 Lappersdorf
Germany

With Positive Pop, Synapscape may have beaten BiGod zo's Supercute for the biggest record name misnomer ever. This is very clearly not pop music, positive or otherwise, unless you consider maniacal beats and cataclysmic sound bytes to be the kind of thing you'd expect from a Britney Spears concert. Of course, that shouldn't detract from the obvious appeal of this record, particularly to those who'd rather sample the sound of a Spice Girls CD exploding in a microwave than listen to it. Tracks like "Thirsteater" and "Orbleflex" are everything you'd expect from Synapscape: rhythmic pounding, disembodied electronic glitches, and distorted, whispery vocals. Tracks like "Bizarre Disco Junky" and "The Power of Love," however, leave powernoise's trappings aside and focus on dense, layered sounds and usual beat structures that are both aggressive and fresh. On Positive Pop, Synapscape don't exactly leave their powernoise brothers behind, but they do stir things up enough to at least qualify as a black sheep of the family. In all, you could call Positive Pop a light-handed take on noise... or an extremely challenging, mutant variety of pop music. You can decide if it's positive. [Kyronfive]

T.O.Y. Space Radio



Contact:
E-Wave / BMG
Drakkar Entertainment GmbH
Bergerstraße 6
D-58452 Witten
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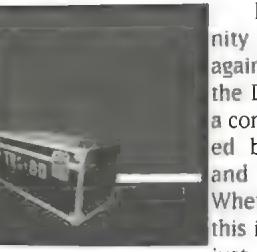
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drone along in what appears to be more of an attempt to take up the dead space around the cliche, watered down, oontz, oontz, oontz, beats. T.O.Y. may not be quite as cheesy as S.P.O.C.K., or as transparent as Apoptygma Berzerk, but they will forever exist in the shadows of Evil's Toy. *Space Radio* is a clean, well produced album, if you're only talking about production quality. There are a couple of "o.k." tracks on the disc, but aside from those, it has about as much depth as a television commercial. Go buy the new Assemblage 23 CD, or any of the Evil's Toy back catalog. [Cosmo]

TRS-80 Mr. Kickass

Contact:
Underground Inc.
P.O. Box 16008
Chicago, IL 60616
U.S.



I just had the opportunity to see this fine band again in Chicago, playing at the Double Door. TRS-80 is a combination of complicated beats, clever samples and keyboard moves. Whether live or from a CD this is a sure thrill. There is just enough repetition in

the programming to groove on and just when you think you've got it down something new is thrown at you. Live the band plays with a synchronized video projecting on the performers playing a combination of science fiction and seventies theme visuals. This is also reflected in the music whether it's the odd samples or the choices of hypnotic structures. Here is a new exciting album from a Chicago electro-industrial band that is kool without attitude. I have never been disappointed with any of their CDs or live shows. [Dan Layne]

Ultra Milkmaids 03/02/USA

Contact:
Y & R
18 Rue appet
44100 Nantes
France



Memories of their U.S. tour mixed (but not edited) to 21 minutes of pure pleasure. The best artistic comparison I can come to is a painting, something careful and delicate, something you imagine the painter has been thinking of for months and then is about to render

in a couple of hours with very little color and very little (traits). Sweet repetitive tunes played louder and louder till they become walls of melody. Sweet little drops of joy coming from a broken Alien-Beauty-Generator™. Limited to 50 copies: RUN AND BUY IT, cause I already have one and that's 49 left. [DDN]

V./Ultra Milkmaids Drone and Unease

Contact:
Zero Moon
4518 Avondale ST. Apt. B
Bethesda, MD 20814
U.S.

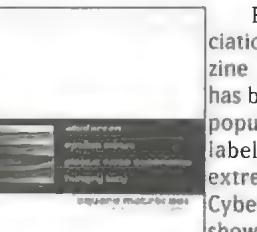


Old school industrial meets electronica. Imagine the bunkers Throbbing Gristle used to play in, covered in flowers and perfumed with subtle scents of lavender and lilac and you're halfway there. Great. Inspired, melodic, rhythmic, violently beautiful and

so varied too (I'm not part of Zero Moon's staff... yet). These bands both toured in the U.S. and played several shows together, with almost nobody in front of them, or so it's said. But you know: "people ain't no good, they never do what I think they should." [DDN]

Various Artists Square Matrix 001

Contact:
Alfa Matrix
90 Rue Charles Degroux
1040 Brussels
Belgium



Boosted by their association with Belgian magazine Side-Line, Alfa Matrix has become one of the most popular dark electronic labels in Europe. Their extremely successful Cyberlab compilations showcase the best in dark electro talent from across

the world and from different labels. *Square Matrix 001* is a split single featuring four bands: Aiboforcen, Epsilon Minus, Plastic Noise Experience (PNE), and Hungry Lucy (lead vocalist Christa Belle is a Lexington Native). All artists except for Aiboforcen are relative newcomers on the label but prove that the neophytes can sure test the limits of the label veterans. This album provides

for a nice dichotomy sure to please the ears of all fans - the pounding, aggressive tracks of Aiboforcen and PNE balance the lovely vocals of both Epsilon Minus and Hungry Lucy. Standing out on the album is the beat-driven Aiboforcen Mix of Hungry Lucy's "Fearful," a perfect amalgamation of musical intensity and vocal subtlety. The clank and clatter of "Mechanical Beatz" by PNE will make you imagine being in Frankenstein's laboratory as the ray gun sounds jolt Claus Kruse's musical monster into life. The popular song "Freedom" by Canadian band Epsilon Minus gets the remix treatment by Dutch band Angels and Agony who create a slow-paced, beat-heavy collage of beautiful female vocals. *Square Matrix 001* will most assuredly make its way to many dancefloors, but should also hold a special place in your home stereo. [Nick Garland]

Various Artists Critical Mass Vol. 3

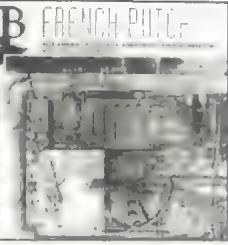
Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.



This sampler from Metropolis offers all of the expected entrées from the Metropolis menu: Funker Vogt, VNV Nation, Front Line Assembly, Apoptygma Berzerk, Haujobb, Wumpscut, Icon of Coil, and Clan Of Xymox; as well as some new dishes from label new comers KMFDM and Dismantled. Highlights include Dismantled's "Human," Haujobb's "Penetration" (floor mix), the start of Funker Vogt's "This World" which kicks off fresh but later falls into the typical Funker Vogt formula; and Peter Murphy's "Things to Remember," featuring an eerie spoken word bit almost reminiscent of Coil, the rest of the song filled with intense vocals and heavy drumming. Having high expectations for KMFDM's latest incarnation and fresh start with Metropolis, I was less than impressed with their track "Urban Monkey Warfare," which just sounds old. Perhaps the rest of *Attak* has more to offer. 2002 is a solid year for Metropolis, and this sampler is a great disc to begin or fuel your electro addiction. [Jon VanWieren]

Various Artists Masonic

Contact:
Hymen, c/o Ant Zen
P.O. Box 1257
93135 Lappersdorf
Germany



Since it's inception five years ago as a mostly vinyl sublabel of Ant Zen, Hymen has grown into the place to go for IDM, as it houses some of the genre's most-respected bands. This dense comp allows the many bands collected here (Baracuda, Beefcake, Starfish Pool, and Somatic Responses, for starters) to play their own variations on that theme. Some artists play up glitchy breakbeats, like the tense "Parasitus" from Venetian Snares and Fanny's "Witches v2," while others go the minimalist route, notably Imminent, offering here a decidedly different sound from their more aggressive fare. The recently signed Gridlock contributes a beautiful, pastoral piece and So Fuckin' Jazz, comprised of David Thrussel and Darrin Verragen, of Snog and Shinjuku Thief and Filth, respectively, puts forth a good track as well. My personal favorite song has to be Dead Hollywood Stars' "Dreamland's Burning (fnga Mix)," which, with its twangy acoustic guitars and gunshot samples, plays like some futuristic Ennio Morricone score. This

This compilation is absolutely wonderful. With tracks from Haujobb, Seabound, Juno Reactor, Assemblage 23, and Hungry Lucy, this two disc compilation is a very delightful mix. Fair warning, there are a few songs on here that have a very gay techno dance club feel to them. The alpha and beta discs both have tracks on them with obscenely repetitive beats. The Young Gods "Astronomic" and Male or Female "Woof" are both examples of where this is present. However, this does not diminish the compilation at all, but adds variety. Hungry Lucy departs from its normal slow melo-

dramatic sounds to create a very danceable song. I thoroughly enjoyed this compilation, and recommend it strongly. [MalignantFemale]

Various Artists

French Putsch

Contact:
Brume Records
98 avenue de Flandre
75019 Paris
France

mostly mellow collection is definitely for fans of Autechre, Aphex Twin, or any of the artists on the Warp roster. [Theresa]

Various Artists Zu Neuen Ufern in Alter Frische

Contact:
Hau Ruck
Postfach 44
113 Wien
Austria



Label samplers are always such tricky beasts. The better known bands almost never offer up their best material, while the lesser known bands are sometimes known for offering up the only song they have worth half a shit to entice you into picking up their full album. Then there's always the tax write-off band which brings down the whole listening experience. Well, these problems are doubled when the label is as diverse as the Austrian label Hau Ruck. By my count, *Zu Neuen Ufern* goes through 5 genres in under an hour. You start off with "power noise" ala SPK from C.O.C., then weird vaguely militaristic euro-industrial from Derneire Volonte & Novy Svet (an off-track from Novy Svet, unfortunately), then into EBM from Novo Homo and Der Blutharsch's side project La Maison Moderne, then into ambient tracks from His Divine Grace and Reutoff, and finally the CD lurches into embarrassingly bad, hand-to-forehead-stapling goth, from a tax write-off band called "Changes." The result is jarring, and hard to listen to in one sitting. But when listening to individual songs instead of the disjointed whole, certain tracks shine brilliantly. Derniere Volonte and La Maison Moderne contribute solid songs. The ambient track from His Divine Grace is incredible, and worth the price of the disc by itself. I recommend this sampler to people with diverse tastes and diverse radio shows. Or to anyone who doesn't mind preprogramming his cd player to skip certain tracks. The whole is less than the sum of its parts, but for under 10 bucks, you could do a hell of a lot worse. [Rick Kinney]

Various Artists Future Perfect

Contact:
Metropolis
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
U.S.



Operating under the assumption that most of you are well aware of the previous efforts of VNV Nation, I'll skip the history and jump right to the future, or *Future Perfect* that is.

Being that you're probably already familiar with *Advance and Follow*, *Praise the Fallen*, and/or *Empires*, you're also already familiar with the emotionally driven lyrics of Ronan Harris. And this is the aspect of this project that often receives most of the attention. But what *Future Perfect* shows probably better than any of the prior releases, is that Ronan Harris and Mark Jackson ain't stupid.

Let's start with the title: *Future Perfect*, which is an intelligent title, one laden with its own significance and history. This was a slogan from the

there are ten commandments

there are seven deadly sins

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Futurists of the early twentieth century, who were the first avant-garde collective to reach a mass audience. The futurists, with Marinetti as their loudest voice, were the first prophets of a frenetic industrial age. Their message was simple; the future is here, and we better start acting like it by actively planning our destinies. This seems to be the general theme of *Future Perfect* as well. It's important to point out too that this title is ironic, the futurists were also known for their love of war and their eventual ties with Italian Fascism and Mussolini. We can be quite certain however that this is not the intended message of *Future Perfect* given the "socially conscious" opening track "Foreword" (in various languages), and Ronan's personal statement concerning *Future Perfect* found on the VNV Nation website, which advocates humanism more than any other ism.

So is *Future Perfect* future pop? To some maybe, but songs such as "Electronaut" and "Structure" are barely recognizable as VNV songs upon first listen, and even the tracks with vocals just don't sound as 'pop' as other recent releases within this genre. Sure, most of this album is smoother and potentially easier to digest than say *Praise the Fallen*. And yes, the distortion pedal (or rather plug-in to the tech heads- the majority of this album was composed within the software realm) was used sparingly. This may be considered a bad thing amongst growing numbers of you who are tired of the softer direction taken by many acts of this genre as of late, but what *Future Perfect* offers is a thoughtful and relevant rant for our times. This in addition to the usual dose of Ronan's heart felt lyrics.

On the whole, *Future Perfect* is another must have for hardcore VNV Nation fans looking to complete the trilogy started with *Praise the Fallen* and *Empires*. But taken alone, this one might not be quite as meaningful or earth shattering to the new-

comer in comparison to either of these previous releases. [Jon VanWieren]

Voltaire
Boo Hoo



Contact:
Projekt
P.O. Box 9140
Long Island City, NY 11103
US

As much as I can appreciate a CD compiled of only broken hearted, woe is me, wretched love songs- and have the CD be entitled *Boo Hoo*- I don't quite get Voltaire's mopey humor. Ok, sure, it's cute. It's funny. But the music stinks and so does his vocals. If it were Morrissey or Robert Smith I'd say, we have a winner!! But the monotonous, acoustic guitar and Italian eatery violin is boring and Voltaire's droning vocals grate on my nerves. I am sorry your heart was broken, dear, but don't make the rest of us suffer. [Lisa Swiss]

Vromb
Memoires
Paramoleculaires

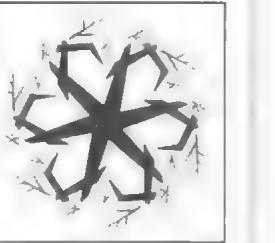


Contact:
Disques Hushush Inc.
Case Postale 1.7.
Succ. De Lorimier
Montréal, Québec H2H 2N6
Canada

The accompanying booklet notes: "*Memoires Paramoleculaires* is committed to throw the necessary light on the shadow zones established, sometimes fortuitously, by professor Heurel Gaudot." Now, I can't seem to find much information on this

Professor Gaudot, but the impression I get from listening to the disc and reading the booklet notes is that Gaudot was trying to discover links between certain sound frequencies and brain activity or brain waves. This disc, like a lot of other premeditated dark electronica, presents a soundscape upon which a listener can add any level of interpretation. The low-key analog-to-digital loops offer many possible interpretations, many possible pathways. The aim of the disc has been met. [Brian Clarkson]

:Wumpscut:
Wreath of Barbs



Contact:
Metropolis Records
P.O. Box 54307
Philadelphia, PA 19105
US

:Wumpscut, in my opinion, are always right on top as far as industrial music. They never fail me. Their sound and albums are always consistent but never boring or overdone. And *Wreath of Barbs* is what you would expect, and want, from :Wumpscut. Like each of their other records, they have songs that I love and can't get off repeat and other songs so noisy or demented, I have to shut it off to regain my sanity. :Wumpscut: melds oppressive and sinister electronics, guitars and vocals with almost tranquil soundscapes at certain times, interesting female chant-like vocals and insane male-sung lyrics. Although never a band to come out with lots of club hits, the first song on *Wreath of Barbs* "Opening the Gates of Hell" (appropriately titled since :Wumpscut: always seems to take you on a trip down a devilish path) comes close to being a good song to move your body to. The sec-

ond song, "Deliverance," also gets you going but then after that *Wreath of Barbs* slows way down by industrial standards anyway. Kind of takes you on a crazy ride to a schizophrenic underworld with talk of evil doctors- "Dr. Thodt" (death), corpses, death and blood. Uncannily enough, the last song does a slight turn to the less evil but none the less it is still creepy. If you like :Wumpscut:, you'll like this. [Lisa Swiss]

:Wumpscut:
Liquid Solyent 2CD



Contact:
Beton Kopf Media
Karl-Stadler-Weg 41
D-8402 Landshut
Germany

This release strikes me as being more for the collector of DJ than for the average listener. *Liquid Solyent* collects tracks from now-deleted EPs (namely the Deliverance MCD, the Ich Will Dich MCD, The Remix Wars MCD, and the Boeses Junges MCD). Four mini-CDs on two full-length CDs sounded like a great deal at the time, but listening to four different versions of "Deliverance" or "Ich Will Dich" back-to-back isn't really all that amusing. This disc is best put into a multi-disc player with four or so other discs so the shuffle-action can take effect. For those :Wumpscut: fans that need to own every possible version of every song ever released, this is a great find. For people looking to discover a new band, there is not enough variety here to really showcase the band. [Brian Clarkson]

Zeromancer
Eurotrash



Contact:
Cleopatra Records
1342 Maxella Ave #251
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
US

The ultra popular Norwegian band The Siegmen disbanded in 1999--only to find half of the band resurfacing soon afterward in 2000 as Zeromancer. ZMR's 2000 release, *Clone Your Lover*, on Germany's East West Records was a welcome edition to the scene, and the band proceeded to tour all over Germany with electro greats Project Pitchfork in 2001. Their latest release, *Eurotrash*, has finally arrived state-side via Cleopatra records in the U.S., and again on East West in Europe. Zeromancer is the perfect band for people who find the VNV-type synthcore trend a little too soft, and true aggrocore a little too jagged. The band's sound is complete futuristic arena rock, with plenty of synth layering and uber catchy anthems. "Doctor Online" is the standout track with its infectious "1-800-Suicide" hook. Zeromancer takes welcome amounts of indulgence with their heavy guitar lines reminiscent of first-gen Die Krupps, or a perhaps a more melodic cousin of Cubanate on heavy hitters like "Chromebitch" and "Need You Like a Drug." Perfect for the dance floor, or personal mind-numbing enjoyment, *Eurotrash* is one album that you shouldn't throw away. [LucastaSin]

Experimental/Noise DEMO Reviews

BY Brian Clarkson



Reviewing experimental and noise releases is always a mixed experience. The genres are so varied that the each release is never the same. This time around, the demos submitted almost fall into a few easy categories: atmospheric, rhythmic, and just plain strange.

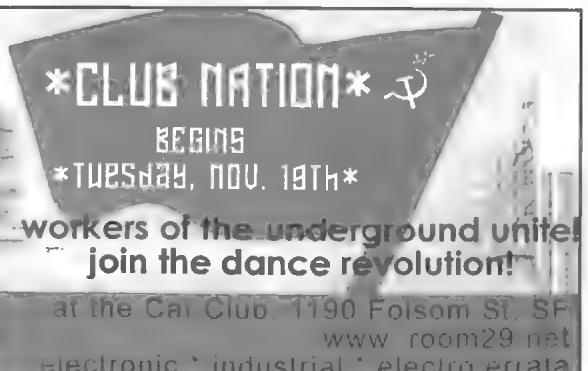
One of the first of the atmospheric releases comes from Houston, TX bases Psychonaut75. They sent in a 4-track sampler from the upcoming album *The Primordial Deep*, a disc (and press kit) full of mysticism. The band's self-expressed aim is to create soundtracks for magical rituals, and their darkwave-inspired music accomplishes their aim. Unfortunately, not all the other atmospheric releases were as excellent as this one. Barto, PA's Murder Legendre sent their *Understatement of Extremes*, and the title says it all for this one. Each track was an understated electronic soundscape nearly indistinguishable from the others. There were lots of swirly noises and low frequency noise, but nothing about the disc stood out as inspirational. I almost couldn't distinguish the CD from the ringing in my ears from too many club nights. Benjamin I. Zavodnick (of Northampton, PA) sent in a CD titled *Oh Yesterday*, a disc comprised of extremely mellow, low-key synthesizer-(or perhaps just keyboard) based atmospheres that also fell a bit short of the inspirational mark. Not a bad effort, but it felt a little flat and premeditated.

A large chunk of this column's 'experimental' demos fell into the 'rhythmic' category--drum-machine driven pieces without vocals. This reviewer isn't too sure that really counts as 'experimental'... On the top of the review stack was South Haven, MI locals Concrete. *Equation of the Blue Horse* sounded a little primitive, almost as though the band was working with older, more primitive equipment. This release could almost be called 'old-school' industrial rather than 'experimental'; their focus is on beat with some random chaos tossed in for good measure. A vocal track would add so much to this release. The next disc on the pile comes from a band called Firefly. All I got with this one was a CDR and a color printout of the cover art I assume would be included in a real release. At first, *Multiple Personalities* struck me as a little slice of powernoise goodness coming from my speakers. I had to give it a second listen to be sure, though, and the second listen left me feeling a bit flattened. Firefly's combination of drum machine and synthesizer

weirdness grabbed my attention alright, but it didn't hold onto it for very long. I can't put my finger on it, but there's something missing the disc is either too predictable at times or too random--but not at the same times. Yipotash's *Siamese Death* is a similar release. One could almost call it power-noise based on the simple, repetitive inorganic drum beats that build up to a near-frenzy, but the BPM count stays too low to really whip the listener into a frenzy. It's almost like this band from Dresden, Germany is starting to show what they can do, but are holding back. But, just leave it to Texans to not hold back one bit. Blowtorch's *Soundscapes for the Mentally Insane* is a big slab of bombastic drum-machine driven chaos. I'd almost call this disc a collection of 'sample-scapes' because of their reliance on samples to drive the music home.

Rounding out the demos this time around is the catchall 'weird' category. One of the discs on the stack is here only because it didn't go anywhere else. Ordnance sent in a copy of *Buckshot*, but it's really not experimental at all. It's a pretty standard set of 'industrial' tracks: drum machines, keyboards, over-sampled vocals, the works. Holy Cow's *Purge* does fall into the generally weird category. I'd almost liken this to early Current93 material; there's a strange resemblance to some of their noisier 'apocalyptic folk' pieces. The emphasis on this disc is the vocal content, though. The creepy background noise almost isn't strong enough to complement the distorted vocals. Another genuinely strange disc came from Ginger Leigh. *Broken by the world*, though created with a Korg, sounds more like a 'world-music' piece than an 'experimental' release. I'm not sure this one got sent to the right target audience.

Until next time



Back in 1986, Johan Van Roy began experimenting with electronic music as Suicide Commando. It was not long after his first tape when he began making his first appearances on compilations. By the mid 90's, Van Roy was firing on all cylinders as he got signed to German label Offbeat and took his first steps on stage. These developments planted the seeds for nearly a dozen club hits and three European tours. Yet after sixteen years, nine tapes, eight full length discs and well over a

SUICIDE COMMANDO



Interview by pHIL.PTI

hundred live performances under his belt, Johan Van Roy is showing no signs of slowing down. Suicide Commando isn't your cliche veteran over-the-hill band fresh out of ideas. Despite an upcoming retrospective release *Anthology* just around the corner, we can rest assured that Johan has a few aces up his sleeve for this upcoming year. Can we say Suicide Commando World Tour 2003 sooner than you think!

IN: Some artists try to distance themselves from the scene while working on an album to limit their influences. But as a DJ you fully engulf yourself with music. Do you feel that it makes a difference in your sound?

Johan: Not really, I've always been closely involved with the scene, either as DJ or just as guest at parties. I always liked to have a certain connection with the scene, just trying to be a part of it and not above it.

IN: Along with being a musician, DJ and concert promoter, you also hold down a full time day job. If you had the chance to do music full time, would you jump at the chance? Or would you rather keep it as a hobby or "release"?

Johan: I definitely would grab the opportunity if it ever would occur, but unfortunately it's not a good moment to take such risks, with all the illegal cd piracy and copying.

IN: What do you find the most challenging of all your projects?

Johan: Suicide commando is definitely the most challenging of all my projects as I'm doing these

Johan: I guess both. I've always been a huge fan of the old Klinik from the eighties and with the "construct-destruct" album I delivered an album that couldn't been closer to the sound of the old Klinik, so when I started working on the *Mindstrip* album I didn't want to copy myself once more, so I tried to move into another direction, a more melodic and danceable direction, but still being faithful to my roots. I think one can still hear those typical suicide commando sounds, sequences and distorted drums from the past, only this time I tried to combine them with more modern and technoid sounds which made the whole more danceable. Personally I more see it as a normal evolution of my works.

IN: Throughout Suicide Commandos tenure, the use of samples has been laid down pretty thick. Yet as years pass it seems the scene has been more and more critical of its usage. What do you feel these samples add to your music? Do you feel that they have a permanent home in future releases?

Johan: I always liked using samples, more specific vocal samples, just like with my vocals I try to use these samples more as an instrument. For me a good vocal sample is as important as a



SUICIDE COMMANDO

other projects just for the fun, my work for suicide commando is way more serious and is taking nearly all my free time. Each new CD is another challenge as I always want to improve and deliver a better product, each time you have to start from zero again and it's amazing to see how such a product grows and evolves.

IN: You've been developed a working relationship with Stephan Herwig since his days at Off Beat. Do you see your relationship with him and Dependent continuing long into the future?

Johan: Don't know ... I guess the future will tell! In fact we already had a working relationship even before the Off Beat period as Stefan already had its own small label called Kugelblitz where I released some Suicide Commando works. I think I can say that we always had a good and solid partnership, which is not always that evident these days.

At the moment we still have a contract for one more CD, what happens after that is still unknown ... we'll see what happens!

IN: In the past few years the scene has taken a sharp turn towards the more melodic side of things. Does this move-

ment have legs? Or will it prove to be a trend?

Johan: There's definitely a trend towards more melodic and pop sounding music (future pop) these days with bands like VNV Nation, Covenant, Assemblage 23, Apoptygma Berzerk, Icon of Coil, but I have no idea how long this trend will stay. I don't consider myself or suicide commando being a part of this so called future pop scene, but it's true that with the *Mindstrip* album I tried to include some more danceable influences. Personally I don't want to be part of any trend, I'm just doing my thing! I already survived some other trends in the past, so I guess I'll also survive the future pop trend of these days.

Over here in Europe they often call Suicide Commando as the "last EBM dinosaur" and maybe they're right. I grew up with the so called EBM movement back in the eighties, it had a major impact on me and the sound of Suicide Commando and I still feel related to it, just trying to be a more modern version of it.

IN: Suicide Commando has been close to the textbook definition of minimal EBM for years. However, your most recent works have become increasingly melodic. Is this a reflection of the scene around you or just a maturation of your own musical leanings?

good bass drum and definitely a must on my future releases.

IN: With your new album yet to be titled, you've stated that you want to take it slow by recording one track a month. How do you expect to keep a feeling of continuity if the writing/recording process is spread out that far?

Johan: One month for one song actually is nothing if you realize that I still have to work 5 days a week. So this might seem like a long period, but actually it isn't. It's even very short if you translate it into working hours! Many people seem to forget that.

IN: What happened to your tape label COde Productions? Is it still releasing material?

Johan: No, I unfortunately had to stop these activities due to my lack of time. It was one of the sacrifices I had to make because suicide commando was taking too much of my free time. However I didn't stop completely. I started a collaboration with the new german label Dying Culture for whom I do some free lance artist managing (hunting for promising new bands) and compiling samplers (like the "high voltage 3" sampler)

Alec Empire

Interviewed by Rick Kinney

IN: Where could an aspiring young band [cough] send a demo for you to give a listen?

Johan: They always can get in touch with me at
info@suicide commando.be

IN: How do you go about hunting for promising bands? What attributes do you believe are paramount in terms of a possible "developing talent"?

Johan: From all the demo's I get in I pretty fast can say if they have any talent or not. You can hear pretty fast if these bands are talented when they have good ideas, structures, feelings. Unfortunately a lot of the material I get in is useless, mainly because most bands don't take the time to grow and mature which I think is very important. It takes time to grow and mature, to create an own identity or sound.

IN: Are there any bands out there that we should keep a close eye on?

Johan: Some new names to remember definitely are Dioxyde from Spain, Aslan Faction and Tactical Sekt from the U.K., Grendel from Holland, all very close to suicide commando without being a copy though.

IN: With your experiences with CODE, how was working with a tape label different than an actual CD label? In what respects were the two formats different?

Johan: I've always been a big fan of the tape scene as it was an easy and cheap way to reach a lot of people all over the world, but unfortunately the tape scene disappeared as it became to easy and cheap to release cd's these days. I always found the tape scene as the ideal learning school for an artist. Nowadays it became too easy to release cd's, so there's no guarantee anymore for quality. 10 years ago you had to be good to get a contract with a label, these days you buy a synth and 3 weeks later you can release your first CD.

IN: Do you feel that there has been an influx of "musicians" in the past few years due to the increasing affordability of home studios and their often pirated soft synths? And to what extent do you think it adds to the dilution of the music scene?

Johan: Sure there has been an influx but I don't see that as a problem, because I'm sure that amongst these are also good musicians, so I don't think the amount of bands is a problem, the problem is that a lot of these bands don't take the time grow and mature and just want to release their material too fast which brings a lot of quantity, but unfortunately less quality.

IN: Many of your peers and labels have been panicking over the recent explosion of mp3 file sharing. I am sure you understand where they are all coming from, but to

what extent do you share their worries?

Johan: I completely understand their worries and I'm fully aware of the danger of this problem. I have nothing against mp3 files in itself, just as long as they're used for the right reasons. We even have some mp3 files on our own website at www.suicidecommando.be including some exclusive material. I even think it's a good way to present your music to people who don't know your music yet, this way they can listen to the file(s) and than they can make up their mind. But where's the limit? Our previous *Mindstrip* album was already completely downloadable from the net before it even got into the record stores. This is ridiculous and is definitely damaging the labels, but also the artists who see their sales go down drastically, get less money for their hard work.

This probably is not such a big problem for major acts who are selling thousands of cd's, but for smaller bands and for small scenes like ours, this certainly makes a big difference.

IN: Now that the popular Audiogalaxy is shut down, is there a feeling of relief in the air, or do you believe a new program is bound to come along and take off running where both Napster and AG left off?

Johan: There are already other companies like Kazaa offering free downloads, so I don't see any improvement so far.

IN: Although it is clear that the artists are on the losing

end of the stick, it appears that the devoted fanbases are really the ones that benefit since the music industry is turning to tours and better merchandising to make up for any losses in cd sales. Do you feel that the presentation of your music and merchandise need to be stronger? When you released the *Mindstrip* Collector's Boxset, did you have the losses due to online piracy in mind?

Johan: We're having a good merchandise deal with the german EMSO label who's doing all our merchandise for the moment, furthermore we're also working with one of the best booking agencies around (Pluswelt), so I'm pretty satisfied with that. With the *Mindstrip* limited boxset we didn't really think about the online piracy at that time, we just wanted to release something special for our most devoted fans. With the growing online piracy it in the mean time became more interesting to release special packaging and stuff, so it definitely became an advantage to release special items, limited boxes.

IN: Do you plan on utilizing copy protection as well on future releases?

Johan: I Don't know, you should ask my label about this. I'm not against the use of copy protection, but I doubt it will solve the problem.

IN: Why hasn't Suicide Commando made the flight over the Atlantic? Is it due to your full time job responsibilities? Or are the schematic of a North American Tour simply not realistic for SC given your fear of flying?

Johan: Major reason why we didn't tour the U.S. yet is certainly our lack of time and my job responsibilities and restrictions. You have to understand that if you want to tour the U.S. you already need at least 2 weeks off from work, and of course that's not that simple. Besides that I'm not that fond of flying, but I heard from many other artists/friends (VAC, Hocico, Noisex) that they are afraid of flying, so I guess I'm not the only one with this problem.

However, as soon as I can combine things with my job, we're coming over, so be prepared!

IN: Are there any hopes for one in the near future?

Johan: Sure, we're working on a schedule for 2003 so we definitely hope that things will work out.

IN: Over the past years SC has evolved from a small project to a festival headliner. What can we look forward to from Suicide Commando in the future?

Johan: Well, I now first will concentrate on the new album which I hope to get ready by the beginning of next year (April). After that we'll first do a new European tour (April/May) and after that we finally hope to come over to the U.S. (July/August). Before (February) we probably will release a new single, and perhaps we even will do some kind of "best of" album (still end of this year). We'll see

For more information on Suicide Commando please visit the official Suicide Commando website at:

www.suicidecommando.be



Alec Empire is fucking great. He founded Atari Teenage Riot, and without him Digital Hardcore would be nothing. Sure, you can say that his hardcore music is undeniably male, and that he's about the 800th person to do a song called "New World Order". However, his solo album, *The Destroyer*, gave birth to the idea of hardcore jungle. He started a genre almost from scratch. What the fuck have you done to compare to that?

I was supposed to receive Alec Empire's latest album *Intelligence and Sacrifice* in the mail before this interview, but I never did. Alec was a trooper, though. He was kind enough to suffer through my ignorant questions without complaint. He is a very charming person to talk to on the phone, although that might not come out while reading this story. When Alec talks about the quality of his music, he doesn't sound like he's bragging. He sounds sincerely excited about it, and not arrogant as some of the words might suggest without hearing it straight from his mouth.

Alec's got a great accent too. He's retained that uniquely German phraseology in his conversation. We've had to edit out certain repeating phrases or else the article would be twice as long. So after every sentence add "to be honest" and/or "or something", and you'll have a good idea of what it's like to talk to him on the phone.

IN: I'm afraid my copy of *Intelligence and Sacrifice*, never arrived in the mail. But, I was able to download some of the MP3s from WinMX... I hope you're ok with that.

AE: Yeah, that's alright to get an idea about the record. I just think that you should listen to the actual record and listen to it to get a better idea of what I'm trying to say.

IN: One of the tracks that I downloaded was "New World Order"... what a fantastic ending to that track! Have you ever thought about putting out a noise record?

AE: That ending was actually done by Elias of Atari Teenage Riot. It's the ending of the first disc, which is more heavy. The second disc is very electronic instrumental stuff without guitars and not very noisy. So she was responsible for that world war scenario... that's how the first CD ends... with that noise. But yeah, maybe I should do a noise record at some point.

IN: Did I read that you worked with someone from Merzbow? With Masami Akita?

AE: Yeah, I've worked with him many times. We did a lot of shows together in Germany and Japan. We played like three times, four times. He played for my new record. He was a drummer for all the Japanese shows that we've done, which is very rare that he would play drums! He did that when he was a teenager in some death metal band. And he said "I'll just do that for you!" It was great! We made a live recording over at CBGB's in New York in 1998. We want to release that at some point in the next month. It was me on turntables, and Merzbow doing like you know... noise... stuff. It was a very good live recording.

IN: The one track I wasn't able to download was "Everything Begins With A Fuck".

AE: "Everything STARTS with a Fuck!"

IN: Right, right, sorry. What a great title! Can you tell me about that track?

AE: Hard guitars, almost like... maybe the terms I use don't make a lot of sense to you, but it's real metal. Very hard guitars, very hard beats. It's like heavy screaming stuff. It's one of the most brutal tracks on the record. And also the right message! You should hear that, I think you'd be really into it. A lot of people say it's one of the best tracks on the record.

IN: You did a record of some Elvis Presley remixes, right?

AE: [laughter] How did you hear about that? There's something of a misunderstanding. I didn't [release] that record. I did do the recordings, but it ended up being a bootleg. In 1998, for two weeks I was watching all Elvis movies in a row. I wasn't really into Elvis before, and to be honest I'm still not. I thought I have to spend some time with this phenomenon! I have to check it out in an intense way! So I watched all of those movies. I don't know if you've watched those movies, but it's real torture, some of them. Unbelievable. Sometimes when something is on TV, and you watch [for] 20 minutes, it doesn't do any harm. But if you watch everything at once, it's pretty crazy. So I listened to a lot of his records also and I thought to make the music based on his singing, and the weird lines that he's saying in his movies. I made these tracks, and then I went to Australia on tour with Atari Teenage Riot. And a guy I knew, DJ ToeCutter, he loved that stuff so much, he asked if he could have a copy of the CD-R. And I said "OK, you can copy it, but don't copy it to anybody else!" He copied it and copied it. And then I saw a vinyl [version] in a record store

in New York at some point. I think that's great, but I never got paid for that. Have you heard the whole thing?

AE: No, I just heard that one "Fight you punk" track, but I thought that was brilliant! I was just wondering if you had to get the rights from the Elvis estate or something.

AE: No, no, no. The funny thing about that bootleg vinyl is on the back there is a message that says all the income from this record goes to scientology and the Presley family foundation or something like that. So, they made a good joke out of it! They even put a address "For Further Information contact" and then they wrote some Chicago address actually, and I think it was the private address of Louis Farrakhan! Which was absolutely insane. I thought that they had done a good job, actually. But, I had to buy the bootleg for 20 dollars! Can you believe that?

IN: Do you know of any other bootleg stuff that people have done?

AE: Yeah, sometimes people do CDs of something, compile stuff from my CDs, and it will have a variation of the artwork. I guess. Whatever. But, sometimes I get angry fans that say "Hey, I bought this and it says that this remix blah-blah-blah is on it, and it isn't." And I say to them "That's not really my record. That's out of my control."

IN: When you're writing music, do you ever start out a track in one style, and then decide as you're making it that it needs to be in a different style?

AE: Ummmm, no, not really. I think about everything beforehand. I really think about what I want to say. Certain lyrics, I'll have the idea first, and I'll think "OK, how should that sound?" What would be the best sound for this line. That's really how I do things. I think about it beforehand, and then I can lay it down. Very rarely do I start something and think it's going in the wrong direction, and then it morphs into something else. I know what I want to do very well when I start recording. And I've set up all of my equipment in the studio in a way where I can do all of that stuff.

Basically I record so I can get the energy of it. For me, that's the most important part. The technology doesn't hold up the energy. I think with a lot of electronic music, people are almost like slaves to the equipment. I think it doesn't sound as raw or powerful than when you do it the other way around. If you make the machines sweat, and you put yourself above your equipment and treat it like a slave. It's a different approach. I don't have much respect for the technolo-

gy. And that's a bit of a contradiction to many other people in the electronic music scene that follow that sort of Kraftwerk philosophy. "I am the human and I put myself below the technology. I see technology as the guiding light at the end of a dark tunnel... blah, blah, blah." I have a much more rock and roll punk approach. I don't see it like Kraftwerk or these other guys.

IN: You're on tour, right now. And you're doing the more aggressive songs from the rock side of *Intelligence and Sacrifice*?

AE: Good! Very good. I'm warming it up every day! I avoid drunk smokers! [laughter] Now I have to do the whole show with my voice. Over an hour of intense screaming and screaming and spitting! That's good, because it totally works.

IN: How long does it take to recover after a tour like you're doing now?

AE: How do I recover?

IN: How long does it take? Does it take a while?

AE: Actually, no. I try to stay fit during the tours. With ATR I always got very fucked up, but now I've got a strategy to not lose my voice! I don't want to spend months of recovery. I just want to keep going, play more and more shows and record more stuff. I'm in very good condition. When I recorded the new record I spent almost one and a half years doing that. I did also a lot of remixes in that time. But, they gave me enough time to get my energies together again, and I've come back stronger than before. I'm ready! For the next 2 or 3 years. There's no question about stopping now.

IN: So it took a year and a half to record *Intelligence and Sacrifice*?

AE: Yeah, but it's like a double cd that's full of stuff.

IN: In the middle of recording *Intelligence and Sacrifice* was September 11th, wasn't it?

AE: No, I actually finished the record in August last year. Then we were playing Japan at a festival at Mount Fuji. I had to get a live line-up together very fast. We had booked the show, and it took me a few months longer to do the artwork and everything for the record and I forgot that we had this show booked. But it was like 30,000 people. That was when I called Charlie Clouser from NIN and he came over and did synthesizer and sampler stuff. And Merzbow played drums. So, we got this band together and it really kicked ass. I mean everybody went absolutely crazy. It was good because I was coming out of the studio after one and a half years. I went onstage and after the second song I was like "Wait a minute. Nobody knows these songs yet!" But, they were going completely crazy for them! It gave me a lot of confidence because it was good, and we could see that it would work out well straight away without people knowing the songs. Sometimes when you play new songs, people just stand there and check it out. Then I came back to Berlin, and that was a really bad time. That was when I heard about Carl Cracks suicide. That was like a big shock. And then only a few days later, September 11th happened. For me I thought, "What is going on?" That week it felt like everything was falling apart. It was a nightmare. For many other people, it was much worse. It was a hard time. We pushed the release back into the new year over here in Europe and Japan. And in America, we wanted to give it a bit more

time an approach it properly and set everything up properly. It looks like we're going to come over at the end of the year to do some shows. And then do longer touring in the beginning of next year. A Japanese person who saw the live show for Mt. Fuji told me that for them it was like my show was like a vision of what was to come on September 11th. We did the "New World Order" song with all the noise at the end, but it was much more intense live with all of these people adding their energy onto it. It was kind of scary they said, that this show happened a couple weeks before 9/11.

IN: Do you think that if you were still working on the record during 9/11, that it would have made it a different record?

AE: No, I don't think so. No, I saw the danger for a long time in all that stuff. Like many of things we've been saying in ATR. People were always going "Come on, you're being too negative." Europe for example, terrorism has been always present since the second world war. We live much nearer in Afghanistan and Iraq and all those countries. We know what's been cooking down there. I think sometimes with George Bush's policies, the way he behaves internationally... I don't know how people see it in America, but it's not very diplomatic! I don't know that he is the right president. To be honest, to deal with these kind of problems at the moment. He just seems to heat up things even more. People are just getting more angry. In Europe at the moment, anti-Americanism is growing so much because of that president. I keep saying that I've been to America many times and I've met a lot of people who think TOTALLY differently! And they are not like Bush! But many people never really see that. In the mainstream you don't see that. You never hear criticism for Britney Spears or Jennifer Lopez or those kind of people, which is mostly what comes over here. McDonalds and that kind of shit. So, it's dangerous. I don't think I would've made the record in a different way, but it has become very much a record of the time now. It deals with that kind of escalation of violence. If you know the whole record, there's a song called "Path of Destruction" that's how the record starts, and that song is about the escalation of violence. It's my sort of comment that's different from my stuff with Atari Teenage Riot. I felt that I had to make that kind of statement. With ATR, we always took sides. With my own stuff like *Intelligence and Sacrifice* I don't really take sides. A song like "Path of Destruction" is about that process. Using more violence, more power and just escalates until it ends with New World Order with that total destruction at the end. At the time when I wrote it, it was almost like a nightmare vision of the future. I think we've entered that completely now. There doesn't seem to be any end of this if we continue down that path. That's what the record is about. But, not only that! There are a lot of other issues on the record. Not too political, it's not like an ATR record in that way.

IN: There was an election on Sunday in Germany, wasn't there?

AE: Yeah.

IN: Did you vote in that election?

AE: No. Actually, I moved my residence to England years ago so I can't take part in the elections. It would have been a good question if I had voted for anyone there. It's very hard to make a decision in Germany, because it seems as if the corporations rule on a global level. They

make the decisions. If they want a change in government, they'll make it happen. A lot of people feel very frustrated with politicians and the corruption and all the lies. It seems like there's nothing you can really do anymore. They just support this rotten economy instead of the people. I think in America it's kind of the same thing. I think that it's good that Schröder and the Green Party will continue for 4 more years. But I don't know if even that will achieve the kind of changes that they wanted a year ago. They had all these plans. But they couldn't even put them to reality because the corporations were putting so much pressure on.

IN: I wanted to go back to Carl Crack who just mentioned. Were there any charitable organizations set up where people can donate money to a mental health organization in Carl's name?

AE: No, I don't think so. No, I saw the danger for a long time in all that stuff. Like many of things we've been saying in ATR. People were always going "Come on, you're being too negative." Europe for example, terrorism has been always present since the second world war. We live much nearer in Afghanistan and Iraq and all those countries. We know what's been cooking down there. I think sometimes with George Bush's policies, the way he behaves internationally... I don't know how people see it in America, but it's not very diplomatic! I don't know that he is the right president. To be honest, to deal with these kind of problems at the moment. He just seems to heat up things even more. People are just getting more angry. In Europe at the moment, anti-Americanism is growing so much because of that president. I keep saying that I've been to America many times and I've met a lot of people who think TOTALLY differently! And they are not like Bush! But many people never really see that. In the mainstream you don't see that. You never hear criticism for Britney Spears or Jennifer Lopez or those kind of people, which is mostly what comes over here. McDonalds and that kind of shit. So, it's dangerous. I don't think I would've made the record in a different way, but it has become very much a record of the time now. It deals with that kind of escalation of violence. If you know the whole record, there's a song called "Path of Destruction" that's how the record starts, and that song is about the escalation of violence. It's my sort of comment that's different from my stuff with Atari Teenage Riot. I felt that I had to make that kind of statement. With ATR, we always took sides. With my own stuff like *Intelligence and Sacrifice* I don't really take sides. A song like "Path of Destruction" is about that process. Using more violence, more power and just escalates until it ends with New World Order with that total destruction at the end. At the time when I wrote it, it was almost like a nightmare vision of the future. I think we've entered that completely now. There doesn't seem to be any end of this if we continue down that path. That's what the record is about. But, not only that! There are a lot of other issues on the record. Not too political, it's not like an ATR record in that way.

IN: Will Carl's solo LP, *Black Ark*, be re-released anytime soon?

AE: Yeah, we got a lot of requests about that. A lot of people say it is a great recording, and I think it is. It is very deep, to fit album in a way. You can really see his side. In ATR you see the angry side of him very aggressive kind of stuff. Most of the time though, he had that kind of *Black Ark* vibe. Deep, dark, but a more quiet sensitive side of him. I don't know yet. Maybe we should do that, because we get more and more requests. It seems that a lot more people want it now. At the time it was more like a limited edition. Maybe we should do that. It's a good idea but we really haven't thought about that yet. We will release an ATR rarities compilation that was scheduled for last year, but we put it back until the end of this year because it felt kind of weird to put a record like this after he died. It almost seemed like we wanted to exploit that financially. I'm not really re-releasing stuff like that very fast. I have this weird feeling that people might interpret it the wrong way. The music should be out there.

IN: One last question, I was looking at some of your press pictures from this new album online. And my wife came up behind me and said, "Oh my god, why are you looking at pictures of Trent Reznor?" And I said, "No, no, no. That's not Trent! Look at his face!"

AE: [laughter]

IN: That's for deleting you.

AE: You see, Trent, when he cut his hair that was for the last album. He was really into ATR at the time. I have had this same haircut for ten years! Through all the records! And Trent hasn't! It's not me. When they had the cover story in, I think it was, Alternative Press or maybe Spin, a guy handled me the magazine when it came out in '99 and said "Look! You're on the cover!" And I thought for a minute that it was me. I couldn't believe it. But what? Or. But Trent gave us a lot of credit in the press over here and stuff. He said Atari was really important for them and all for *The Fragile*. So it's ok!

Photo by Hervé Baudot



Conjure One is the much anticipated solo release from international producer/artist Rhys Fulber. For more than 10 years, as one half of the groundbreaking electro-industrial units Front Line Assembly and Delerium, many of his releases became what some consider to be industrial 'classics.' Many of these albums mark not only the artist's personal growth but are definitive examples of the evolution of the industrial sound in general. Like all true artists, Rhys Fulber is constantly reinventing himself and his music. From his work as a producer (Fear Factory, Paradise Lost) to his songwriting skills on Delerium's *Silence*, Rhys continues to show fans how incredibly diverse he really is. 2002 finds Rhys finally releasing *Conjure One* after nearly 4 years in the making. This self-titled album is a combination of Fulber's considerable studio skills and a unique palette of 'world' sounds collected during nearly 3 years of globe trotting. I phoned the underground electronic icon at his Los Angeles home early one Saturday morning.

conjure one

Interview by Seth McDonald

IN: Are you as excited as I am about a 10:30 AM interview?

Fulber: Is it too early for you?

IN: [laughs] No, it's alright.

Fulber: I get up really early...

IN: So it's the middle of your day then?

Fulber: Not quite, but yeah, I'm an early riser so I like doing this kind of stuff in the morning.

IN: Going from the Front Line sound to the Delerium sound seems kind of a big jump...

Fulber: Really? I don't think it was. We still made the records the same way. It's just different sounds, you know? Different samples, different synth patches. The tracks were made, well, they didn't have like the intros and the big long breaks, it was more of a pop structure. But, to me, it wasn't really that different.

IN: Did you use the same approaches and methods, just different sounds?

Fulber: In a way because any time I worked with Bill Leeb (Front Line Assembly/Delerium) we had a way of working. The way I do my own stuff is different though. It's a different way of putting stuff together. With me and Bill we kind of, well, I wouldn't say it was formulated, we just kind of had a way of getting stuff done and when I work on my own I work in a really kind of different way. It's a little more, well, just all over the place. Things start differently. I don't know how to describe it – it's just a different way of working.

IN: What do you mean? Did you and Bill have duties? Like someone would do bass lines and someone else would do drums?

Fulber: Yeah, kind of. Bill would usually have some kind of idea for a tune and I would kind of put it together for him. He would always play the bass lines and I'd play all the chords. I did all the programming and stuff. So we had a way of doing it. My own stuff starts differently. With

Delerium we started a lot of songs with samples. A lot of stuff on my record I didn't start like that. I'd start with, say, just a piano melody. So it's just a different way of building up the tunes. I think on this record I was trying to rely more on riffs and melodies whereas with other stuff we did in the past it was more of a vibe and atmosphere.

IN: What are the big differences between Delerium and Conjure One?

Fulber: I think Conjure One has a little more variation. It's got a little more of an edge and I think it is more "poppy." I didn't want to make a record just like Delerium. I had a lot to do with the way those Delerium records sounded so it's inevitable that some of that's going to be with me still. I want it to be different and I think when I get to the next album it's gonna be more different. I used to think that it was really different and now I look back and go "I think, to the average person, it's gonna be not that far away from one another." The original plan I had for Conjure One was to make it kind of heavier like the song "Redemption." Are you familiar with that track on the album?

IN: Yeah.

Fulber: That was the first song I did for the record.

IN: That's the most extreme track on that album.

Fulber: That's the first tune I did in 1998. It's the first tune I put together and that was what I wanted to do. I wanted to make it hard hip-hop beats with heavy bass and a sort of Turkish feel on top. That was the initial template for how it was supposed to sound. Then things just kind of went a whole bunch of different directions. The songs "Redemption" and "Pandora" were the way I initially had the project to sound in my mind. Then I kind of got some 'poppy' tunes in there and everything started moving around a little bit and changing. Initially I started using a lot more live instruments. I sort of had this direction in mind, but it's just because I was working as a producer and doing remixes at the same time that just made everything take a long time. At the end of the process I had problems clearing a couple samples and when you have a lot of guest vocalists you have to have all these contracts and deals with everyone sorted out. All of the logistical stuff took at least a year. That's why the record kept getting delayed. It wasn't because of the music; it was because of business stuff. That was kind of frustrating. I had to keep replacing samples. It was quite a haul.

IN: It seems like most of the Front Line Assembly beats were made with either synthesized or preset drum sounds but Conjure One has more of an urban feel. More like sampled breakbeats instead of an electro sound on the drums. In what

ways has your technical approaches and methods changed?

Fulber: The way I program beats now is different.

IN: In what way?

Fulber: I do it more on the computer. I use live drums and percussion a lot as well. To be honest, I think, in some ways, I was a bit of a guinea pig for Netwerk and Bill because I was working on my record before they made *Poem* (Delerium's first record without Fulber) and then they started putting lots of live instruments on *Poem* with the people I had done it with. I think they were seeing how it would work out because we never really thought about doing stuff like that when I was in Delerium. I think they kind of watched how I did this stuff and thought "Hey that's pretty cool" and then did the same thing. I

didn't have any list of vocalists or anything, it just all happened. It was all just weird little coincidental things. "Center of the Sun," I think, is one of the best things I've ever done. That song, I really, really like it. I'm really proud of that one.

IN: Why did you choose to use real string arrangements instead of keyboard string patches?

Fulber: I was working with a guy named Chris Elliot who is a string arranger. He does a lot of stuff for film and television work in England. He was a friend of a friend and I hooked up with him and we became good friends. He sent me these arrangements he did just with just samples, like the multisamples that you can get. The passion and the emotion just comes out with real string sections. You can't get that with samples. It's just impossible. Like the song "Pandora" has those bending strings. You wouldn't be able to get it the same way with samples. It's expensive as hell and that's the one hold up, but it's worth it. I mean, some of the tunes have sampled strings on them as well, but the main arrangement songs have the live strings. Again, it just sounds awesome. There's no way you can replicate it. I mean you can get close for certain things. Especially if it's behind a rock band or something, but when you got it right up front like that it's so much better with

started in '98 so there were demos lying around everywhere for ages. I got live drums in there really early and then we chopped them up in the computer. I just wanted to get stuff that's got a little more groove and feel, a little more natural feeling. I wanted to get away from all the real stoic electronic stuff even though there's still some of that in there. I'm already working on another record because, like I said, most of the material on this record is kind of old for me anyway. I've already started working on new things that I think are gonna go more in to live instruments, less synthetic. I've been playing with synthesizers for a long time. I don't even use that many of them anymore. I just use my computer and go in to studios and record bits, bring it back on the computer and manipulate it. You just kind of get tired of doing stuff a certain way and you just want to find different ways to put stuff together. I work with a bunch of people now who are really good musicians and you just learn from all the years of experience. You just learn how to put things together better. I couldn't have made this record 5 years ago, there's no way.

IN: Yeah.

IN: Speaking of the musicians, how involved were Tom, Rick, and Dido?

Fulber:

Well, Rick Nowels actually co-wrote 2 of the tunes on the record. Basically, I had a bunch of songs that I had written and I was having problems finding vocalists and people to write parts so my manager hooked me up with some songwriters. Pop songwriters like this guy named Billy Steinberg who has written for loads of people, household tunes such as "Like A Virgin." I was really surprised that he liked what I was doing in the first place and we got together and got along really well. We wrote a couple of tunes together. He works with Rick Nowels a lot so I met Rick through him. They had this tune they both wrote – the "Tears From the Moon" tune and the song "Sleep." They played me these songs and I went "Man, these are great tunes and I would really love to cut versions of these." That's how the relationship started. It started out with the song "Sleep" and then later on "Tears From the Moon" came up. I was initially gonna do it with Bill for the new Delerium record, but Bill kind of wasn't that into the song or something. I worked on it with Rick. I like working with people like that because I learn so much off of them. These people are total pros. They've been doing it a long time and they know how to make records. I learn from them. For me it's just all a way for me to get better. That's how that whole thing happened. Then, Billy Steinberg's publishing person put the Sinead O'Connor thing together. He had Sinead lined up to sing the tune. I did

Amsterdam because Tom Holkenburg (Junkie XL) was working on the record. They had like 3 rooms set up with different people working on stuff. It was this big operation. I really like that record. Most of the stuff I end up listening to is stuff I'm working on so it goes all over the place. Usually I listen to music in my car so those are the kind of discs I've been listening to in the car. Changing between the Buzzcocks to Sasha to Doves. [laughs] All over the place.

IN: Kind of diverse.

Fulber: Yeah, well, I like all kinds of music. I can listen to almost anything and find something good in it. I'm not really interested in RGB and I don't like hip-hop anymore. I used to love hip-hop but the new stuff is just kind of boring. I listen to a lot of old records, like stuff I used to like when I was 11 [laughs]. Just revisiting it and going "Man, this really sounds good." I don't listen to too much electronic music lately, actually.

IN: Oh yeah?

Fulber: Yeah. Well, I like the new Sasha record. I bought the new Future Sound of London but I haven't even made it past track 3. I don't even like it that much. Other than that I've been listening to Mogwai. You ever heard of them?

IN: No

Fulber: Scottish band. They're kind of like an ambient guitar band. Oh, and I forgot to say one of my favorites is Craig Armstrong. You should check out both of his albums. They're awesome. His new album and his previous album are both killer. I listen to those a lot. How could I forget that?

IN: Being an electronic musician what do you think of the current state of industrial?

Fulber: Well, industrial music bores me completely. I don't mean to sound like a dick but I just can't listen to it. It just bores me. I'm like "show me something new, guys." It's all Front 242/Skinny Puppy still. Nothing's changed. You know what I mean?

IN: Yeah, for like 10 years.

Fulber: I don't mind some of the Haujobb stuff... some of that stuff I hear and go "This is pretty cool, I like some of this stuff." But it still reminds me of Skinny Puppy for some reason. I think it's the way they do the vocals. I was into that stuff in the 80s. It just was fresher then. Now it sounds kind of dated. I guess you could say that about a lot of things but it just doesn't excite me anymore. I don't get the same thrill when I listen to that kind of music that I did like 13 years ago. Even when I was in Front Line, by about 1992 I kind of stopped listening to that music completely. By 1992 I was more into dance stuff. When the first wave of trance hit and all that... I was kind of more into that. Then there was the ambient stuff like Autechre and Aphex Twin. I've been kind of away from that thing for a long time. Sometimes I'll go on to an internet radio and just listen to what the stuff is. There is something about VNV Nation that

I don't mind. I think because it's sort of melodic and really euro-sounding, it's sort of OK. But most of it I just can't get into anymore. I'm more into different stuff. I mean, I know it's an industrial magazine I don't want to sound like an asshole but I'm just being honest. I prefer to listen to like the new Coldplay record and get off on the songs. I'm more into songwriting and a lot of industrial records don't really have super brilliant tunes. I want to expand my skills as a songwriter. You do that by listening to killer songs and learning from people. I'm always looking for a great chord progression in there. We've written all these minor chord progressions every which way around for years and I want to get away from that. That's why I listen to more of this kind of stuff because it touches me more.

IN: What do you find more challenging? Pop song structure or making layered droning?

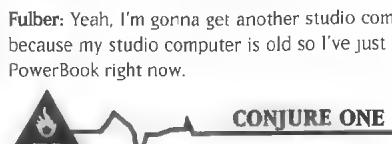
Fulber: Oh man, songwriting is hard. It's not easy. If it was easy there would be more great songwriting bands. It seems easy and I know a lot of people from that industrial crowd would always say "Oh, yeah that's crap," but songwriting is a really hard thing to do. When I listen to the new Coldplay record it sounds really simple but you try writing one of those tunes. That's the genius of it. You get something that's simple but has a depth to it. Songwriting is really not easy. That's why there are not really that many long-term successful pop writers, because it's not that easy. I'm published by Zomba which is the Jive label which puts out all the really teen-pop records. Why do you think there's only, like, 5 guys who write for all those artists? Because it ain't easy. I mean, you can slag off Backstreet Boys till the end of time but try writing one of those tunes; it's not easy to write something people can pick up on like that. I can make ambient layers and drones till the end of time. I like that stuff as well, but songwriting is the big challenge. That's what I tried to do on my record. I'm into songs. That's what gets me off. I think this record is really true to what I want to do, what I like. I couldn't make an industrial record now, it wouldn't come from the heart.

IN: You've always been big on samples. Even the Pantera sampling in the later FLA stuff. How much processing does a sample go through to become part of one of your songs?

Fulber: Everything is totally tweaked. That's kind of where I got myself in to some trouble because I was clearing [all the samples used]. Some of it was so manipulated that I probably wouldn't have even had to have done it but I did it anyway and it got me into a bit of trouble because I had to change a few things. Yeah, but everything is definitely tweaked, changed in pitch. The only song where the samples aren't altered that much is the song called "Pandora." There are these Albanian folk-music samples on it. I heard them on some disc and they just sounded fucking miserable. I loved it. I thought that I should make a tune around it. So those samples are fairly true, but the rest of them are all kind of sliced and diced, reversed and things like that.

IN: You're on the PowerBook now, right?

Fulber: Yeah, I'm gonna get another studio computer, though, because my studio computer is old so I've just been using my PowerBook right now.



IN: Do you have any other favorite pieces of studio gear that you are using right now?

Fulber: Man, I'm all about Logic Audio. I bought the Logic control unit. It rules. To be honest most of what I do is in Logic with the Logic sampler the DS624, the Logic synthesizers. I only really use a few pieces of gear now. I've got loads of keyboards sitting in my studio here but I don't use as many as I used to. I keep it more lean and trim now. I have an Emulator 4 that I still use a lot. I've got a bunch of Nord synthesizers and I got an analog modular synth that I use. That's about it. I keep it pretty lean. A lot of the stuff on my record was made with the analog modular patch synthesizer. That's the best way to make synth stuff because it comes out the most unique. You get more musical, squelchy, weird kinds of things that way. I like doing that and then recording it in to audio and moving it around. I like going in to studios and recording instruments like guitars and drums and then bringing that in to the computer and moving it around. I'd have to say that, for Logic Audio, I love it. Then it ends up in ProTools later.

IN: What do you think of the new software that's like virtual gear? Like Reason?

Fulber: I love Reason. I use it a lot actually. I use it for making little loops and stuff. On some of the newer stuff I've done I've used it a little bit. It's nice to make your own little loop, record it, and then drag it into your session. That's what I use it for. I don't put songs together in Reason or anything. I just make little loops and things like that. It's fun. I can take my computer anywhere. I was doing the Paradise Lost record and I was in England for two months. I bought some crappy computer speakers, had my audio box, and I just set up in my hotel room.

That's what I'm into right now. I just like to travel, bring my computer, and work on stuff. That's why I love the Logic system so much right now just because there's the virtual synths in there and I can literally just jump on a plane with my computer bag and that's it.

IN: You still work with metal bands and a heavy guitar sound.

Fulber: Yeah, Paradise Lost is a metal band basically

IN: ...and Fear Factory and ...

Fulber: Yeah, I did a remix for POD and Mudvayne recently. I still do some of that stuff.

IN: Do you find it difficult to be that creatively diverse? To go from producing Fear Factory to making Conjure One?

Fulber: No, it's all music. That's how I look at it. I don't really find it difficult. I produced 2 songs for this classical singer named Josh Groban's record. He's kind of an opera singer. You

couldn't get further away from Fear Factory than Josh Groban. I think I'm going to play keyboards for him on his PBS special at the beginning of October.

IN: No way [laughs].

Fulber: He called me and asked me "Do you want to be a featured performer [on my PBS special]?" He toured with Sarah Brightman so you know the kind of crowd. It was through that big producer David Foster. They liked the Delerium record Karma so that's how I got involved with them. I just kind of brought that thing to the record and they loved it.

IN: So you're going to

be on PBS?

Fulber: Playing keyboards with Josh Groban. With tattoos with all these people in tuxedos [laughs]. It's gonna be awesome. I think I'm going to do it just because I think it would be a laugh, you know... and I like Josh. He's a really good kid as well.

IN: I read in an early interview that you said that a Kraftwerk show inspired you?

Fulber: That's the first concert I ever remember seeing. It was the Autobahn tour and I was maybe 5 or 6. My parents were kind of into trippy music at the time. My Dad had a lot of Zappa. From, like, Led Zeppelin to Frank Zappa and then jazzy stuff like George Benson. We lived in Germany when I was really little and they had Kraftwerk records. That's how it all sort of came about. My dad had really good taste in music, basically.

IN: Were there any other like early electronic pioneer type artists that inspired you?

Fulber: When I was a kid I liked Jean Michel Jarre a lot. When I first heard that stuff I really vibed on that. It was like something you'd hear under school documentaries and stuff. Oxygen was one of those records you heard a million times and when I finally had the record I was "Oh, this is what this is, ok, I see." I used to really like this record by the singer of the Buzzcocks, Pete Shelly. He made this electronic album called Homosapien back in the day. I was like 11 or 12 when it came out. Back at that time I used to really like OMD as well. OMD were actually probably one of the biggest influences on me though I don't really talk about it too much for some reason. They were like my favorite band. Architecture and Morality was my favorite album for a really long time. I had a little crappy synthesizer and just learned all the tunes. That's probably where the string heavy vibe comes from. I was always really in to OMD and the way they always had the pads in the background. That was a huge influence for sure. Then after that I got in to all the really heavy industrial stuff like SPK and all that. I was pretty young when I got in to all this. By the time I was 15 I was already listening to some really obscure shit.

IN: You still work with metal bands and a heavy guitar sound.

Fulber: Yeah, Paradise Lost is a metal band basically

IN: ...and Fear Factory and ...

Fulber: Yeah, I did a remix for POD and Mudvayne recently. I still do some of that stuff.

IN: Do you find it difficult to be that creatively diverse? To go from producing Fear Factory to making Conjure One?

Fulber: I think it's the best thing I've ever done. I was playing it on the piano and just kind of singing it to myself and thought "You know, this is a good song." You could just do it Tori Amos

style and it would still be good. That, to me, is the indication of a good tune.

IN: That's your all time favorite?

Fulber: So far, yeah. I love it. When I listen to it, it makes me kind of go... [sighs]. There's some Delerium stuff that I think we've done good but I didn't have the same passion when I made those records that I do with my own records. Like when we made Karma we just put it together. It wasn't really like a master plan. Even for "Silence" — the song that everyone sort of knows us by now — there was no major thing behind it. We just did it. [Sarah McLachlan] came in and threw down a vocal and that was that.

IN: What was that like? She's notorious for being not so confident in the electronic world. How was it working with her?

Fulber: I didn't really work with her. I was really ill at the time. I set up the songs on the computers and samplers and passed out on the couch. Then she laid down a vocal. I had pneumonia. I was deathly ill. I was coughing up blood. It was horrible. I've never been so sick in my life. I still had to come to the studio because we were mixing. I had to set up all the songs because I was the one who ran the computers and samplers. I was just so ill that I hardly remember it. It felt like a big blur. Greg Reilly, the engineer, recorded her as she laid stuff down and that was it. None of us really gave her much direction or anything.

IN: Are you familiar with the CRTC's minimum required Canadian content law?

Fulber: Yeah, I think it sucks. I think it sucks because it lowers the standard of music.

IN: It didn't help you early in your career?

Fulber: Of course it did. They got Semantic Spaces and played the hell out of that stuff because of that. I think that sucks though. I want them to want to play it. I don't want them to play it because it's Canadian. I think that's weak. I think it lowers the standards of music, I really do. I think it takes away a lot of the competition. Why do you think so many original, unique, innovative bands come from England? Because the competition and the level of quality is so high that in order to get stuff through it's gotta be really cool. They don't have 'English content' on the charts there. They just play what they play. It's the same thing in America. But maybe I shouldn't say it's a bad thing because it's probably paid for some of our videos. You really can't argue with that. I prefer doing things the hard way.

IN: How and when do you consider a song "finished?"

Fulber: I'm still figuring that one out.

IN: Do you fine-tune it forever?

Fulber: I did on this record. I really went over it. I went over it and then I kind of hit a wall. Then I went over some of the tunes with Tom and a couple of the people I work with down here. When you get another person in to the mix then you can tell when it's starting to get finished. When you're on your own sometimes it's tough. I don't know, you just know. Like, when I do remixes, I just tinker. I used to spend at least a week on every mix I do and just twiddle and twiddle. You just get to the point when you go "You know what... I think it's done." I'll hear stuff I did and I'm like "Oh, god, I could've done that, I could've done that..." Like the remix I have that's out now for that band POD — I'm not happy with it. It's so frustrating sometimes because they had someone mix it without me so the only way

I even heard it was by buying it at the store. The final mix is so frustrating in this business sometimes.

IN: So you do let stuff go out the door that later you kind of feel a little doubtful of?

Fulber: When you're dealing with major labels it's a different kind of beast. I have the same thing with the Josh Groban stuff. I did my thing and then they want you to hand in the parts. You don't really get paid until you hand in all the stuff and then it's almost like they do whatever the fuck they want with it. It's kind of frustrating because I'm not a mixer. If I was a mixer I'd mix it myself and hand it in finished but I don't think I'm a good enough mixer to do it to the standard that I want it at. I always have to have another mixer come and do the final mixdown. That's where these problems always arise. It's just all personal taste, too. Like, the engineer will make it sound good but it's not necessarily the way you want it to sound. That's the kinds of problems I have with some of these things. It's not like they sound like complete crap, it just doesn't sound how I wanted it

blings of a tour. My view on the tour is "Hell, I'd love to do a tour." I haven't been on the road with a band for a long time. It would be a really complex affair because it's just me. I'd have to hire everybody, which basically means it would cost a lot of money. For me to be able to do it, I'd have to see how well the album did. If I put out the album and no one cares then it's gonna be like I would just be spending all my own money to go on tour. Since I make a living off of music, that would be kind of a rough thing to do to myself. Another thing is, I think certain fans of this genre of music don't understand that it is a business, unfortunately. It's now I make my living so I can't do something crazy like go out there and put together this big production when I'm not really selling albums. I'd be losing tons of my own money. I gotta live. I'd love to do a tour but I have to make sure that there's enough support out there to make it happen. We'd have to see how the record does and see if there's demand for it and whether the promoters would want to do it. I don't want to go out there and lose my shirt. I'd love to do it but I'd have to make sense otherwise it'd be like suicide. That's what my managers told me. "If you wanna go out and blow your income for the next 5 years on a big tour, then be my guest." Then I might have to get a day job. Forget it.

There's a record release party here in LA on the twenty-third and I was initially gonna try and put together a little live set but it would be so much work for just like 20 minutes. If something goes wrong I'm gonna look like a total loser. The reason I say that [playing live] is gonna be so expensive is because I want to make it something. I don't want to just go up there with a MPC and a mixer, waving my arms around. I want to have something really cool and vibey. I remember when I was a kid I went and saw Severed Heads support Skinny Puppy around 1986 or something. I was into Severed Heads big time. I loved what they were doing - the City Slab Horror record and Since the Accident record... that was just so cool. Then I saw them live and that just killed it for me. There was just no vibe at all. They were really unfashionable, nerdy guys just touching the little keyboards. There was some little video screen. I love those guys, don't get me wrong, but when you're a teenager and you see that, you're like "uhhh..." The reason Skinny Puppy got popular was because of this big fucking rock show. They had the hair and they looked weird. It makes a difference, I'm telling you. It sounds corny but it's true. I'm still the same way now. If I go see a band, I like bands to look cool and have a cool show. I think it's important. It's part of the whole thing.

IN: Entertainment...

Fulber: Yeah, exactly. That's the reason why I have to wait and see for my tour because if I do a show I want to have musicians on stage I want to have a visual production. I want it to be an experience. I don't want it to just be, like, 2 guys and a keyboard. There's just not going to be any vibe.

IN: Does that mean you'll be touring with a 23 piece string section?

Fulber: No, I'd probably just bring me and maybe 4 other people or something. I've kind of thought about it already. The other thing is that I want to try and play stuff live. I don't want to have it be all playback. What's the point? Just listen to the record. That's something I tried to do when I was in Front Line Assembly. I tried to make our live shows fairly live, by reorganizing the backing tracks and trying to play as much stuff as possible. I just don't see what the point is otherwise.

Visit Conjure One on the web:

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SEVERED HEADS

By Brian Clarkson

Severed Heads has been recording strange, demented pop songs made from assembled samples and other noises since 1979. Most people are probably familiar with the work that Severed Heads released on the Nettwerk label: albums like *Bad Mood Guy*, *Come Visit the Big Bigot*, the *Bulkhead* compilation, or the 'companion pieces' of *Since the Accident* and *City Slab Horror*. Later albums were released on Volition Records in Australia with some licensing done by (the now defunct) Decibel in the US. While the line up of the band has changed a few times, the major force behind the band remains Tom Ellard. Ultimately, Tom Ellard started his own CD-R-based record label, Sevcom, to handle the release and distribution of Severed Heads releases (and, in some cases, other projects such as CoKlaComa). So now, the entire Severed Heads catalog can be obtained through www.sevcom.com, the home page of the Sevcom label and official site for Severed Heads.

Industrialnation got a chance to bounce some e-mail onto Tom's computer screen and get the low-down on the current activities of both Sevcom and Severed Heads.

IN: When did Sevcom launch?

Tom Ellard: I mentioned it in 1988 when we did a compilation called *Bulkhead* on Nettwerk. The intention came long before any real motion, due to comfort. Motion came when our normal record label world fell apart in 1996, money owing, stupid demands for normalcy, etc. Out of the loop we had to go through some withdrawal pains but started to be independent again. It needed some advances in the tools as well. Computers and burners and suchlike.

IN: What gave you the inspiration to create a CD-R label?

Ellard: Having achieved as much commercial success as seemed likely (a top 20 single) and not being inspired to go down that path I wanted to revisit our earliest and in many ways happiest time, before our involvement with the music industry. The time seems right – compact discs are no longer an elite product,

the internet allows self-promotion. There is a stigma about handmade music, but once a comparison is drawn to the visual arts – the single canvas vs. the print – and even food, where home cooking beats fast food – the preconception is revealed.

It gives a whole new meaning to 'making music'. And Severed Heads is supposed to be about initial risks like e.g. the first MP3 album (actually MP2), live video onstage, home made CD-ROM...

IN: Since you mention that Severed Heads was originally about taking risks ... Other than the obvious (i.e. self-promotion) what are the risks that Severed Heads/Sevcom are tackling now?

Ellard: Some examples: playing live as Severed Heads usually means a headline gig and some backstage comforts. Playing live as CoKlaComa means on first and last kiss get off. But that's where we learned the most and so that's where we have been for a year

or so. And then there's new mediums, like programmed video (www.scene.org), where there's no real rules established – and no Grammies. Out on the frontier is the place to be.

IN: What influenced the decision to recreate (remix/repackage) the Severed Heads backcatalog?

Ellard: I don't see the point of pretending to be naive. Rather than trying to re-make albums, it's better to have albums available. So people that only like

the early releases (we call them Cliffords) have that

opportunity and not in the overpriced 'collectable' market either. Also of course there's an element of 'we did that a long time ago sonny'. We are lucky that we started to archive our music on digital tape since 1985 and so most material is in excellent condition

Remixing is only ever done to reconcile what we wanted to do at the time with any shortcomings - it's not to modernize the music.

IN: Are there any plans for new Severed Heads releases?

Ellard: Certainly, there is an album that has been code named *Lap Top Pop*, but now will actually be called *Op*. It is recorded, but to my mind is not well defined enough to be a release just yet. We have work in progress samples at www.laptoppop.com. It's a pop album, because I like to listen to pop albums, and that's the way you should go about making music. My idea of pop requires a bit more discord than is there at the moment.

IN: Is the current Severed Heads line-up just you, or are others involved in the creation of *Lap Top Pop* (or *Op*)?

planet as people recall our influence on current music. Hi Orbital!

IN: What kinds of projects do you see being released by Sevcom in the future? Where do you see Sevcom in the future?

Ellard: I'd certainly see more visual material. The music side has been going for 20 years now and the re-issues are sufficient. I am very excited by the European 'demoscene', where young programmers show off their coding skills with real time video generation - that's a place that recording artists haven't really explored. So, Sevcom would be more about an experience that you can download and enjoy on many levels, perhaps like a well crafted computer game. My programming skills are pretty feeble

Ellard: Hobbies? Shit, who has time for hobbies? I regularly work until late in the evening to keep up with all these stupid ideas.

IN: What keeps you (and Sevcom, going day-to-day)?

Ellard: Well, of course there's times when I think it's all a horrible failure. But I am more often surprised that a group from a suburban bedroom in Australia can get as far as it has, to travel the world, to be broadcast and imitated and meet a lot of good people. Severed Heads never held very high expectations or self opinions. We've been able to age gracefully too, something that kills a lot of bands. It's all about being happy at doing what you do, rather than angst about what you cannot.



Ellard: In my opinion four guys trying to make an LP

is like four people trying to paint with the same paint brush at once. But there's a load of people involved in mixing the paint and hanging the canvas. Bitching about the colours...

IN: What other projects are you working on currently?

Ellard: A DVD of our videos would be great but will cost a bit to create, more re-issues of old albums are coming out. I have a feature film soundtrack coming up late in the year, and always maintaining our online community at www.sevcom.com – the Sevcom Pub.

We've got a lot of licensing going on as well - Severed Heads are popping up on compilations around the

planet as people recall our influence on current music. Hi Orbital!

IN: Does Sevcom keep you occupied full-time? How big of an operation is it currently?

Ellard: No, I work at an advertising agency part-time. Sevcom is now big enough that I don't have to work full-time, but it's not like the glory days where I could buy a house with the music. It's all about quality; I really don't give a damn if I don't outsell some mainstream act. I figure only a tiny percent of the population is worth talking to anyway. One person listening to an album beats a hundred playing it in the background.

IN: What keeps you busy (hobbies, etc) outside of Sevcom?

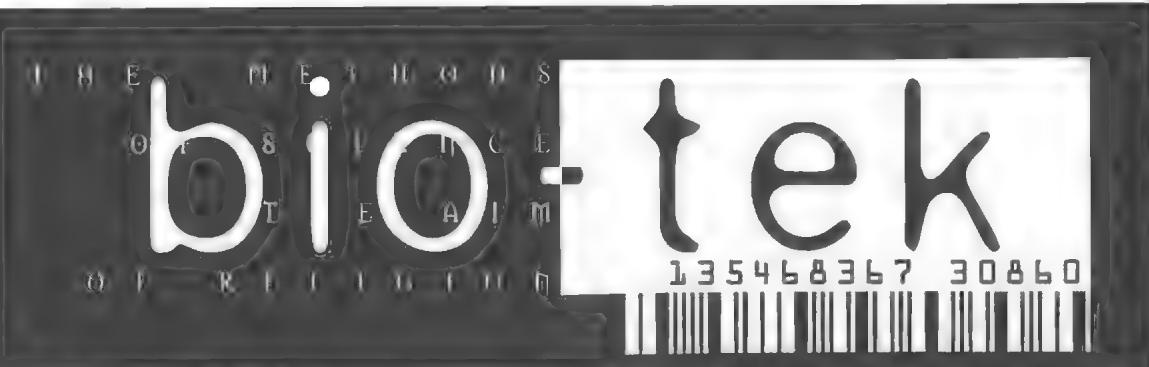
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Bio-Tek, from its inception, has been an EBM-laced fusion of horror, bondage, and the occult. The man behind it all, Jonathan Sharp conceived it in the mid-90s as a more evil receptacle for his twisted music designs than other projects he had going on concurrently. *New Mind*, *Hexedene*, *Hyperdex-i-Sect*, and a few others (Sharp rivals Bill Leeb for total number side-projects in a professional career). Appearing first on the scene with the albums *A God Ignored is a Demon Born* and *Darkness My Name Is*, both released on the seminal-yet-now-defunct Zoth Ommog Records, Bio-Tek swiftly made waves for being an EBM terrorfest replete with gravelly vocals, scorching beats, and horror movie samples. Later, shifting to Doppler Effect Records (fronted by Sonic Boom founder Jester), Bio-Tek has released two subsequent records: *Punishment for Decadence* and *Ceremony of Innocence*, the latter which was released this year. In the face of the scene's recent shift towards uplifting, trance-infused lovefests, Bio-Tek has stayed aggressively evil. Maintaining its hardline occult-and-horror-set-to-music stance, Bio-Tek has recently attacked such spooky subject matter as HP Lovecraft, Allister Crowley, and, erm, Placebo (see the cover of "Pure Morning" on *Punishment for Decadence*). The following interview was conducted with Jonathan Sharp via email on Halloween.

IN: What's the history of Bio-Tek? I know the project originally started out on Zoth Ommog.

Sharp: Like most projects I've done, it's got a long and confused history attached. It began in the early 90s as a sideline to [Sharp's main project] *New Mind*, to do something strictly EBM. You know, the old school XMTP, Leaether Strip-style of stomp-beat. I did an album's worth of stuff and began shopping it around, imagine my delight when Zoth Ommog actually picked it up! I did the first two albums for Zoth, but the guy who signed me, Alex, left and I didn't exactly hit it off with his replacement, Torben Schmidt. We had some differences of opinion and it was pretty obvious I was better off elsewhere. Hence the shift to Doppler Effect. They then set up a license with Wire and that's where we are today. Though I have to say I can't say nice enough things about both Doppler and Wire. After all the label BS I have been through over the years, it's nice to deal with people on a professional level at last!

IN: All the album covers and titles feature a theme of sex and religion, it seems. What is the artistic vision behind Bio-Tek?

Sharp: Satanic pornography is a term I like to bandy around – or satanic EBM even. Let's say I have a more than passing interest in the occult, and I use that in the "literal" – that which is hidden – sense. I think my appreciation

for topics like trashy horror movies and HP Lovecraft is pretty well documented.

IN: Bio-Tek is pretty famous for its sampling, particularly its samples that have also been used by other bands (Skinny Puppy, Front Line Assembly, et al.). I hear you're pretty unrepentant about that.

Sharp: Hell yeah. Partly it's a case of: it's a cool dialog sample I'll take it, I don't care if someone else already has. But I guarantee you that Bio-Tek albums also contain a good portion of samples so obscure,

that no one but a serious horror movie fan is going to recognize where they originate from.

I suspect Jean Rollin movies are a little thin on the ground in the U.S.

IN: As an artist, you have literally

dozens of projects (*New Mind*, *Hexedene*, *Takshaka*, *Hyperdex-i-Sect*, etc). What prompts you to create a new project? What does Bio-Tek express about you that the others do not?

Sharp: Dozens of projects yes, but not so many are still active anymore. I think they all have some different aspect of my musical personality. I do consciously try to individualize them. Obviously the collaborative projects have other people's input too. Bio-Tek, I think, is an outlet for that part of me that's probably still too gothic for its own good. And I use the G word also in its classical sense, not its current parlance.

IN: The track name "Vengeance Not Victory" on *Ceremony of Innocence*... seems strangely familiar. Care to comment?

Sharp: Yes, it is a somewhat friendly swipe at a certain band and genre, which I don't need to name. I think the gentleman concerned has taken it in the spirit it was intended. Well we're still on email terms anyway!

IN: Have you ever played any live shows as Bio-Tek? Think you'll ever tour?

Sharp: No, it was never ever conceived as a live project. Any live shows form this point on are probably going to be instrumental only, or of the things I do with other singers. The car accident I was involved in last summer pretty much put a stop to doing shows in the short term, but I think I'll start doing some again next year, I've kind of missed it!

IN: All of the Bio-Tek covers have pretty arresting artwork. Whose photos are these and how did you end up using them? Is bondage an important theme to Bio-Tek?

Sharp: From the very start I wanted each Bio-Tek CD to have a certain look, and that's gradually evolved and become more explicit with each subsequent

release. The photos themselves are done by Vicci Musson, a UK based fetish photographer. The pictures are commissioned and exclusive to the release. I also have to mention the amazing design and layout work that Josh Finney* then does. He works his magic with the raw image files to make the finished design.

I think though the imagery has gone about as far as we can take it without moving into really explicit pornography. So things will be a little different for the future releases. In fact the whole project is moving and changing.

IN: Why the Crowley samples on *Ceremony of Innocence*. Are you into Crowley?

Sharp: Yes. What ever your opinion of the man, his figure looms large over the whole occult world. If you have any real interest in occultism, you cannot go very far without bumping into Crowley. I find him an endlessly fascinating and inspirational figure.

Though, for me, I find more in the works of Austin Spare. There's actually a poll being conducted in this country at the moment – the greatest Englishmen/women – my vote is split 50 / 50 between Crowley and Cromwell.

IN: What's the future of Bio-Tek?

Sharp: Right now what I'm slowly piecing together is an instrumental album – an album that concentrates on the more symphonic aspect of this project – each track will be either an alternate piece of soundtrack to an existing horror movie, or a piece inspired by a certain aspect of fantastic literature. I think it's time to move the focus and progress. Doing soundtrack/backgrounds is in danger of becoming my day-job, and as such I feel I finally have the expertise to pull this off over the length of a full CD.

But, hell, nothing ever goes to plan, so wait and see.

*Josh Finney is a former Industrialnation writer-turned-freelance artist!

For more information on Bio-Tek and other Jonathan Sharp projects, please see:

[www.sonic-boom.com/
mission-control/](http://www.sonic-boom.com/mission-control/)

Fuchno



Perfect Dark
Here I Stand

Contact:
ADAM RECORDINGS
408 Davis Ave
Suite 1
Harrison, NJ 07029
U.S.

This EP is unlike anything you have ever heard. Emotional, creative and gabber al. at once. The trax are short, sweet, good natured and fun. Anyone who thinks hardcore is too repetitive will think again after hearing this. Beat by beat, Perfect Dark unravels the true deal with hardcore in the breakdown of "Wake Up." "Ever get the feeling that everything you do your whole life is one big crock of shit?" Oh, hellz yes. Sounds are added as he explains further and then it kicks. "Welcome to Dark's world of gabber hardcore." There's another little freestyle vocal session with Perfect Dark over snares and high hats during "Hardcore in My Blood" and then the bass drops. "Beats were made for stomping and that's just what they'll do. One of these days these beats are gonna stomp all over you." I almost shit myself the first time I heard that.

Cute little happy sounds follow hacked to smithereens with the gabber beats like an axe. Brilliant. Make sure you catch this guy's live P.A. He goes by the name ATROA now. Definitely very air guitar worthy. (DJ Mama CJ)

DJ Buzz Fuzz — The Revisited EP

The best way to describe the A-side "Hey!" by Tony Samonelli is to ask you to think of gabber with two step vocals. Kind of scary. There's an extraordinarily cheesy breakdown followed by a phat buildup that drops into the kind of hardcore that teeters toward the speed of superhard Chicago house. I will probably never use this track unless I'm really drunk or have run out of both sides of all my records to play at a house party. The B side features "Frequencies" by DJ Buzz Fuzz; the original '92 '95 mix and a 2002 mix. The '95 mix is the hot shit. Rough tough and anthemic. Classic. Tweaky old skool sounds but still incredibly hard hitting. The 2002 mix is more nu skoolish (obviously). It skips the bounciness and gets straight down to business with rocking. (BZRK Records, c/o L.Costellostraat, 22 1325 CN Almere, Holland) (DJ Mama CJ)

Panacea — Chartbreaka EP

I am completely addicted to this. *Chartbreaka* consists of three plates filled with utter insanity. Imagine deep, dark, rolling basslines (the best part of dark tech step), peppy vocals and old skool hardcore sound effects (the best party of happy hardcore). These tracks are perfect for mixing with hardcore. They're relentless, ruthless and right up my alley. The exact opposite of minimal. There is true fusion of hardcore and drum'n'bass on the Dj Scud Burnt Out Raven Mix of "King of the Jungle" probably even more so than on the original. The vocals range from UK MC to scary ass spell casting all over kick ass beats of course. I'm usually pretty stationary while I'm spinning but when I play these plates I wish I had something to throw up in the air or set on fire. I end up doing this hybrid of the jungle nod and head banging like a candy raver nightmare. (Position Chrome/Force Inc., 4060 St. Laurent, suite 602B, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 1Y9 CANADA) (DJ Mama CJ)

Schizoid — All Things are Connected

SCHIZOID, a true to form digital hardcore artist hailing from Kitchener, Ontario, Canada pollutes your mind w/ harsh in-your-face racket that can hardly be classified as music, but is well recognized and endowed by many extreme music lovers. From Schizoid's DIY (do it yourself) release *Enough Is Enough* featuring the premier and raw power of what J.Schizoid is capable of producing, made way to his "2000 Promoganda" CD which combined the old raw power with the new elements of brutality. Still the materials are nothing in comparison with Schizoid's first full length pressed release "All Things Are Connected" (DTECHO).

All Things are Connected spews forth 14 tracks crammed full of political outcries embedded in screams of rage that are backed by a matrix of computer based glitchy sounds of electronic noise, metal influenced guitars and a mixture of samples strewn in and out of the songs. *All Things are Connected* is an album that at first is hard to grasp the concept of and acquires a particular taste in music, but all in all strikes highly of originality and intellectual concepts that test all your limits. Its an album that must be played at extreme volumes to generate the proper atmosphere and listening environment, and its sure to piss off any parent in the process. (DTRASH c/o Jason S, 34 Ontario Street North #1, Kitchener, Ontario, N2H 4Y4, Canada) (Wednesday Elektra)



psyche

By Nick Garland



photo: DJ Bitter

IN: When you first began Psyche did you have an idea of where you wanted to take it and what you wanted it to symbolize?

Huss: Yes I did, but never knew if it would be realized. I think we've managed to retain the meaning and overall feeling of Psyche songwriting since the beginning. Mainly we really wanted to make freaky synth tracks with interesting and well-thought-out lyrics. Now after all the releases I think I've maintained a good documentation of life experiences. It's fairly biographical but also observant of developmental aspects of humanity as well... So now I guess I have developed the status of Psyche's intentions after all.

IN: Has Psyche's progression pleased you? Was it what you had expected?

Huss: Well my brother and I at the time seriously thought "Brain Collapses" could be a Top 40 Hit, or at the very least "Unveiling the Secret." The closest we ever came to commercial radio play was "Eternal," but "Sanctuary" got on the radio in Germany so that has been good. I have my ideals, but expectations are mainly just to survive and make music as long as I can. And by default I have created a certain legacy I hope.

IN: Do you feel that your sound is still relevant today?

There are some bands that have been around for decades who are perfectly content with resting on their previous success and touring with a discography as a tool to sell "best of" compilations in dire need of creative updating. Music that was once cutting edge now attracts a tour audience that hasn't listened to new music since Reagan left the Oval Office. Enter Psyche, the band that brought several hits to Europe in the 80s, a constantly mutating collective that isn't afraid to forge ahead of their stagnant contemporaries. Their ever-evolving trademark electronic pop sound crosses temporal and creative boundaries making Psyche as relevant and as inspiring today as they were nearly two decades ago.

The Psyche legacy cuts deeply and intertwines with the pasts of many other bands. The band began in Edmonton, Canada, when brothers Darrin and Stephen Huss combined horror and electronics in front of an unsuspecting audience. Dwayne Goettel even played with Psyche for their very first live appearances before deciding to move to Vancouver to join Skinny Puppy. Now consisting of lyricist and vocalist Darrin Huss and sound designer Remi Szyszka, Psyche continue to refine their sweet but biting electronic sound. Darrin looks back on Psyche's past and shares his youthful recipe for keeping the band fresh and interesting.

Huss: Well I think the newer sound with Remi is today's sound. The older stuff is relevant as a reference point for some people. I think there are a lot of timeless tunes in our back catalogue. The more we become predictable, the more relevant an alternative is needed, isn't it? I think some of our songs are downright timeless! I mean if you look at Soft Cell's "Tainted Love" or Eurythmics "Sweet Dreams" I'd say that sound is still relevant. Otherwise people wouldn't constantly be updating these songs! Maybe in 10 years some new groups will bring out their interpretations of Psyche tunes. There's been a few. And Psyche is more than just a "music of the moment" thing. I think songs like "Misery," "Brain Collapses," "Eternal" or "The Saint Became a Lush" will still sound fresh to many as they discover our back catalogue.

IN: Describe the synergy the two of you have both on and off stage and how it compares to previous Psyche line-ups?

Huss: We generally seem to understand what we're trying to achieve with Psyche and enjoy performing our latest material. I think the excitement in the audience for our latest sound adds to our enjoyment and builds up our confidence. Maybe this was lacking at certain periods of Psyche's line-up. It's the youth, beautiful youth.

IN: Do you feel that as Psyche ages you have to make a special effort to keep your sound fresh and interesting, especially for the younger audience?

Huss: In a way yes, but it just accidentally happens that we are always fresh and interesting. I can't deny that I am aware of what the younger audience is into, but the advantage for me now is that many aren't aware what "electro" sounded like before and so we can experiment in any way at all.

IN: How do you think the new Psyche sound compares to pre-Artoffact releases?

Huss: Some would say it's cleaner and more futuristic. A few of the songs like "Looking Glass" or "One Last Kiss" could've come from the earlier Psyche, though, I think. But overall we're into the modern club sound which we'd kind of ignored in the 90s.

IN: Why do you want to take Psyche into a more club-friendly direction?

Huss: Because with the ignorance of the mainstream radio and video channels the only option is in clubs, I feel. I like the atmospheric side to Psyche as well and don't want to give that up, but a whole album of slower quieter stuff rarely receives notice these days. And there is quite honestly lots of room to be innovative in dance music. Grooves are always evolving and mutating.

IN: Who does the cover art for your albums? How do the art and music relate to one another?

Huss: Originally all the covers were decided upon by us except the first album *Insomnia Theatre* which had a bloody head smashed on concrete (chosen by Louis at New Rose) and ironically fit perfectly with that album although we found it a bit brutal. Then we had the "pop star" phase where we were often on our covers ourselves, and felt the way we looked was our music. In fact we repeated this for the *Accession* release of *Sanctuary* with just our heads in the darkness, and the title in blood red. But if we're talking about the Artoffact covers, well Yolk, the label owner, chose the design for the *Sanctuary* EP and *Endangered Species* (editor's note: these covers were created by former Industrial Nation writer-turned-freelance artist Josh Finney). I had the idea of the hand somewhere disembodied. These images follow the statements of the particular albums, I hope. We were honestly so focused on our remix album that we really kind of let that one go as far as creative control on the design. We will focus more on the artwork for the next album. I know some may think the drawings on the original *Misguided Angels* are a bit too gothic for that collection, but I wanted something moody and striking. It's obvious we're now seen as more of an electro act but I don't want to forfeit a striking image for some computer design.

IN: Do you think that some of the new digital designs have become somewhat cliché for electronic bands?

Huss: Damn right you are! I hate them all, especially the "white cover" electro trend. It's fine if you sound like Kraftwerk or Haujobb, something Sci-Fi I guess, but I'm more into humanity, personally.

IN: Choose one of your favorite songs and guide us through the creative process. What inspired you to write that song and how does the programming complement it?

Huss: I really have too many stories behind my songs, just one? I'll just say that my favorite songs are always those where the lyrics and melody come almost subconsciously, and just flow out of me. Examples of those are: "Eternal," "Drowning Pool," "The Hiding Place," "Unbreakable," "The Outsider" and "The Beyond." "Renegades" is also an example where I find the music and vocals really define each other. The music is actually written first in most cases.

IN: What has motivated you to keep making music as Psyche after all these years?

Huss: Courage provoked by fear! Another thing is because I just feel that there's still much to be done in electronic pop. Too many people aren't really doing it well so I continue to develop my own niche.

IN: What sets apart Psyche from all the other electronic pop bands?

Huss: My voice and I think our style of pop is always a bit rougher around the edges and less calculated than many are today.

IN: Why did you choose to cover Soft Cell's "Sex Dwarf?" Why has Marc Almond been a big musical influence?

Huss: "Sex Dwarf" is a happy accident that appeared in 1994 originally. Since the album before, called *Intimacy*, was very slow and moody, I felt we were lacking a scandalous dirty club hit! In fact, I originally recorded this cover for a tribute sampler, but later convinced my label at the time to release it. I always liked the title, and since Psyche normally has no real "sexy"

songs I figured this would be the one. Of course Soft Cell are the gods, and Marc Almond has achieved things I can still only dream about. I've been compared to him my whole life anyway, but that was in fact the reason I chose to distort my vocals on the original recording, and still people said I sound like him! Why has Marc been an influence? There are a few true originals in this biz', and those are the only people who inspire me.



IN: Much of the lyrics on *The Hiding Place* are quite somber. What events or situations in your life have affected the songwriting on this album?

Huss: That's the irony of this super modern record because the lyrics are almost a therapeutic journey through all that I remember, and how I got to this point in my life. A similar journey was taken on *The Influence* in 1989. "Imaginary Life" sums up the whole mood. I almost used that as the title for the album in fact. "Renegades" jumps out of the concept with its aggressive rebel chorus, although, yeah, there's even a bit of sorrow in that lyric as well. I guess I'm often in that mood, although it was summer! *The Hiding Place* was like being reborn so I guess I had to clear out a lot of baggage first.

IN: As we become more reliant on technology to fulfill our everyday needs, do you feel that somehow society becomes dehumanized or irreverent of the needs of other people?

Huss: It was already getting like that in the 90s, now it's extreme. I think the general populace either embraces it or they go kicking and screaming against it. I guess I like the Cronenbergian route (see *Videodrome*). I say mutate along with it, but be careful about who your friends are!

IN: In the early days, you toured with seminal bands like Suicide and Alien Sex Fiend, but now bands such as Beborn Beton and De/Vision are your contemporaries. How has the touring experience changed over the years?

Huss: I think any kind of live stage performance is somehow rock 'n' roll theater. I don't see any differences — sometimes big audiences, sometimes just a hundred people. I stick to my beliefs of performance, and we want people to share an adventure with us.

IN: What are the biggest obstacles that you face as a musical artist?

Huss: Those contemporaries [laughs]! But seriously, I don't know, still trying to figure that one out. Getting older doesn't help!

IN: What can we expect from Psyche in the near future?

Huss: Bitchin' electro tunes, freaky singing, and a few modern clichés turned on their heads.

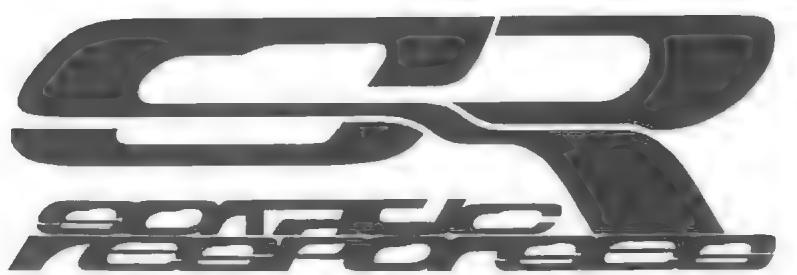
IN: Where do you see Psyche going musically in the next few years?

Huss: I do hope one day to make the "solo" album to show other aspects of my vocals, but until that day Psyche will continue to try and expose uncharted electric avenues while telling stories from the mind's netherworld.



By Kyronfive

It's rare that a band comes along that creates something so innovative and inspiring that it makes waves in multiple electronic music genres. Even rarer does that band crop out of the middle of nowhere. Welsh brothers Paul and John Healy have done literally just that, both cropped up out of the middle of nowhere (in their case a small town in Wales) and unleashed a sound on the unsuspecting masses that has been embraced by not only powernoise enthusiasts but by the hardcore, gabber, drum & bass, and IDM communities. Somatic Responses has been around less than a decade but, due to their popularity and prolific nature, they've already put out more records and CDs than most bands release in a lifetime. Not surprisingly, the list of labels they've released material on reads like a who's who of hardcore and experimental music. By creating behemoth tracks forged of bleak and unrelenting beats and soundscapes, they've built a reputation for creating music that is hard and mean. Despite their surly sonic profile, the brothers come across as positive and optimistic people in person. The following interview was conducted via email. The first half of the questions were answered by John Healy and the remainder by Paul Healy.



SOMATIC RESPONSES

INDUSTRIALNATION

IN: Why the name Somatic Responses? I have to admit I don't normally ask bands where they got their name but I'm legitimately curious about yours.

J.Healy: When we came up with the name (about '93) I (John) was studying for a degree in Biomedical Sciences, which turned out to be extremely boring and I left as working in a lab for the rest of my life wasn't what I'd planned. Anyway, one of the modules I studies was the nervous system and from this came the term "a somatic response" – basically it is the voluntary part of your nervous system which allows choice rather than involuntary actions (i.e. when you pick up a hot plate you automatically let go). It's a statement by ourselves saying that we do what the fuck we like (musically) because we love our art so much. We don't follow trends or styles – we just do what feels right & what we'd like to hear.

IN: How did your extreme, challenging sound come about? We assume this sort of music is not commonplace where you live. Does the Wales lifestyle affect the Somatic Responses' sound?

J.Healy: Well, we love hard, fucked up, funky beats. The hardness comes from the sheer power and energy found in those electric beats, the complicity and intricacy excites us as it's challenging – it motivates us, the funky aspect probably comes from our love of breakbeats – god bless James Brown. Ammanford / Wales has NO hardsound scene whatsoever and, strangely enough, this isolation has helped us develop our sound, uncontaminated and our own. I don't think that the Welsh life style is represented by our music, but it does represent our own lives.

IN: It's pretty rare that a band comes along that can be simultaneously embraced in so many genres. You've been an important band in the IDM, broken beat, hardcore, and powernoise scenes. Why do you think this has come about?

J.Healy: We love many styles of music and we believe that it's very dangerous to limit your appreciation of music / art – yes you will have favorites but it's essential to us to have an open mind and an eclectic approach to music. We're big fans of electronica in general (we hate the word IDM as it's a useless description) and probably listen to this



genre most – at the moment, but you can't beat blasts out some fucking hard and dirty beats on a loud system.

IN: Similarly, your music seems to embrace many different electronic music styles. Is this schizophrenia, or just an interest in all sorts of music?

J.Healy: Both.

IN: Also, you've released records and albums on literally dozens of labels. Was this an intentional decision on your parts or did it just end up that way?

J.Healy: It's just ended up this way, as time has moved we're becoming more selective as, like most artists, we have been screwed over by record labels, but we've also met some labels that we totally trust and will hopefully release further material in the future. One of the reasons that we release on so many labels is due to the amount of material we collect in a short period of time. It's safe to say that we have enough material available at any time to release 3 or 4 full-length albums!

IN: In what ways does making music with a sibling benefit your collective writing process? How does it hinder it?

Paul Healy: We are constantly competing and trying to impress each other, there are no pitfalls to this as far as we see, sometimes we'll spur each other to try something new instead of doing a similar style track 3 times in a row, so it's all positive...working together is a very honest and upfront process.

IN: What do your parents think of your music?

P.Healy: They are proud of us and have supported us (sorry, mom, about all the years of music blasting throughout the house). They like some of it but a lot just passes them by I suppose....

IN: What influences Somatic Responses? Not just other music, of course, but movies, visuals, sights, sounds, etc.

P.Healy: We love films by David Lynch, and lots of sci-fi, we also love the work of Chris

Cunningham, surrealist art is cool too. Dali, Roberto Matta, and HR Giger being amongst our favorites...being from Wales we love both dramatic and bleak landscapes...mountains, the sea, harsh weather are nice for creating mood...

IN: Tell us a little about Photon Emissions. What are your plans with this label?

P.Healy: It will be an outlet for our own material at first then bringing in some friends and creative artists from around the world, plans are on hold temporarily as we are both affected by recent moving of houses...

IN: Are you ever amazed at the way in which your music has traveled the globe?

P.Healy: Yes it's great to get email from Argentina, Russia, Tumble (top tumble) and all over realizing that our music has made an impact on someone's life, no matter how insignificant it's flattering!

IN: Your music can be dark and disturbing, yet you come across as fairly positive and optimistic in your interviews. Care to comment on that dichotomy?

P.Healy: We think that life should be positive and fun I suppose, but when you touch your creative side it seems the darker more serious side comes out, whether this is a form of therapy I'm not sure but it helps us remain stable. I don't see the need for ridiculous cheesy music, when people say this track is funny it angers me slightly, if I want to laugh I'll watch comedy. Humor and music is a very difficult mix that very few have mastered.

IN: What is ahead for Somatic Responses?

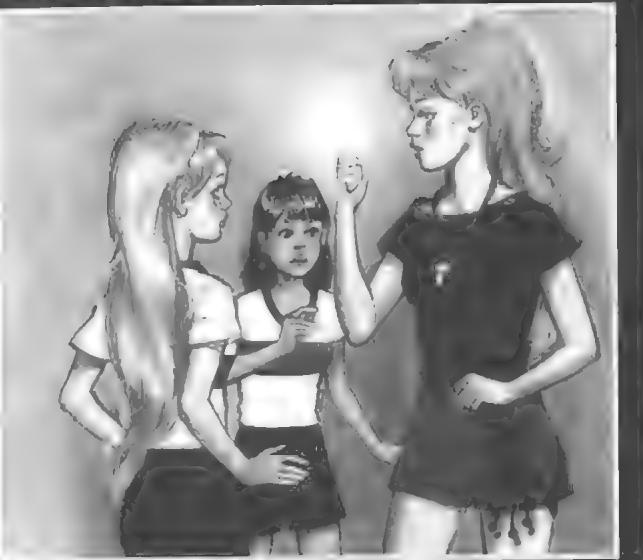
P.Healy: A full length CD on Component Records, A Cdatakill remix on Ad Noiseam, a Gridlock remix on Zod, a release o3 on Zhark recs., Talks are underway for a release on Zod, and more stuff for Hymen including a collaboration with a very special electro outfit.

For more information, please visit the official Somatic Responses website:

www.c8.com/somatics



IRON LUNG CORP "DITCH THE ATTITUDE, PALLY"



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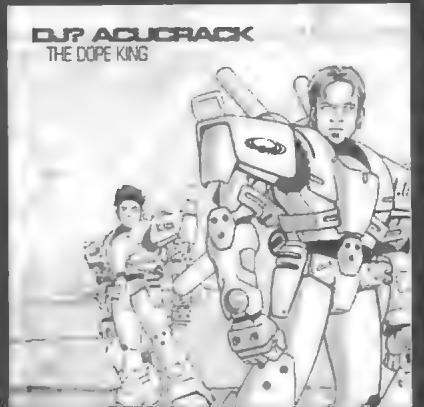
"LIKE A BLOODTHIRSTY CRUSADING KNIGHT, ILC TEARS INTO THE INCREDIBLY LOUD TUNES AS IF THEY WERE A GROUP OF ARMED PEASANTS, RAVAGING AND MANIPULATING ELEMENTS OF BOTH METAL AND INDUSTRIAL IN ORDER TO SERVE ITS TWISTED GOAL!" -SKIN

Combining industrial strength know-how, hook factory raves ups, an attitude of flippant disregard for your mom and a big middle finger to the rock star camp, ILC presents its first new album in 8 years. Their previous album *Big Shiny Spears* featured the club anthem cover of Nitzer-Ebb's 'Join in the Chant.'

Featuring Dan Neet from the CLAYPEOPLE and members of ACUMEN NATION, "Ditch the Attitude, Pally" was produced by Lord Pickles & Kidd Knobbs. This sick and giddy ride through the underbelly of industrial rock and rivet is riddled with crushing drum programming, maniacal synths and buzzsaw guitars, combining rage, heartbreak and humor throughout. Featuring 'Piehole Superstar' and 'Canine Strap' this album pays homage rhythmically to the ILC's industrial forefathers of the WaxTrax era, while harnessing the songcraft and melody that the Cracknation crew is known for.



ACUMEN NATION



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DVD



DVD



DVD

Bumfights - Cause for Concern

If it seems as if several heartless men are preying on the desperation of homeless men, they are. They call these acts "Bumfights." In essence a few guys pay the homeless men from a couple of major cities to fight each other and perform violent, harmful stunts. This movie contains violence, adult language, and mild nudity. These are three of my favorite subjects.

To most people this movie is a brutal depiction of street life. Personally I like to think of it as retaliation. These bums are getting paid for these stunts with beer, food, hookers, and drugs. It's not as if someone is holding a gun to their head. They are proud of what they are doing.

The main man in the film is Rufus the Stunt Bum. He performs a series of acts which include repeatedly ramming his head into a fast food drive-thru sign, throwing himself down the side of a mountain and picking fights with all of his "bum" friends. Now that's what I call entertainment! A friend of Rufus the Stunt bum gets "BUMFIGHTS" tattooed on his forehead on his own free will, all for a nice blowjob. Another "character" in this film is Bling Bling, a crack addict who shows the precise way to smoke crack and then lights his hair on fire and then defecates on the sidewalk.

The 23 year old filmmakers Ray Laticia and Ty Beeson who got their idea after witnessing violent altercations among men living on the streets say that "society has a fascination with homeless people, almost a perverse fascination. People don't get a chance to see much of that.

We thought it would be exciting to get a glimpse of that kind of life." In several scenes there are instigated acts by the producers in a segment called the "Bumhunter," a parody of television's the "Crocodile Hunter." The sequence starts with a man in a safari outfit who goes out and finds a homeless man sleeping and then quietly sneaks up on him and binds and gags him. He then makes comments on the size and variations of the bums and then marks them up with a pen and then "releases them into their natural habitat." Some may say this is cruel but all the bums on the video have given their consent to be used along with offerings of food, money, and clothing.

This is a brilliant movie and I would advise anyone with a love for good old fashioned violence to witness it. Plus you get the pleasure of seeing these bums getting the shit beat out of them by their own kind. "Spare any change?" [jenbug]

Speed Tribe

What's cooler in your hand: an air guitar, or an air hammer? The Air Hammer is a much noisier tool used by racing crews to remove and tighten wheels on an endurance car such as those highlighted in the Le Mans 2001 spectacle featured in "Speed Tribe". The annual pilgrimage to Le Mans, France is not a likely event to attract electro-indie fans but this is the video subject matter of this Front 242 side-project. Daniel Bressanuti and Patrick Codenys have contributed to the 24 Heures Du Mans DVD. Dubbed Speed Tribe, this project is available on DVD+CD as well as the standard CD package released through Dance.Com

This is not a music video, it is a visual document of the 2001 Le Mans race with a great technological soundscape. This audio visual concept album project was completed by husband and wife team, Rod Chong and Sharon Matarazzo (collectively known as MediaKill). Young video director Chong met Daniel B. and Patrick met in L.A., when he was working on the mainly unseen Skinny Puppy's Process "Curcible" video. It was at this time the three agreed to work together on a project but only recently has Digital Video production become cost effective for a specialized title. The racing theme DVD visuals were put together from last year's race footage including interviews by veteran racing commentator Paul Truswell. Vocal excerpts of drivers are used as samples throughout the soundtracking. The haziness of lights as cars emerge over the crest and bulging video frames pound to the soundtrack as scenes come alive with electricity. The rain of that year gave a great backdrop for scene changes and refracting lights.

Intertwined beats much like the different experience the driver has travelling at speed through the French countryside then coming back to the crowd filled grandstands. Speed Tribe features Le Mans like you've never seen it in a 25 minute visual mutation. A second "alternate" version is ready for an immediate viewing as well. Through an amazing cinematic presentation, cars, people and race sounds are set to electronic beats and soundscapes, originally composed and produced in superb surround sound of the refined techniques of Front 242 for the first time in a 5.1 audio mix!

DVD Extras feature race driver interviews which may not impress typical electro/techno viewer as it does the race fan, but the included CD will. The 24 track 60 minute companion audio CD contains exclusive remixes not contained on the DVD. More ambient sounds reworked again by Bressanuti and Codenys. Halfway through the audio disc (track 13 - Grisha) we get back to the title theme and discourse of rhythms... And as a owner's bonus, an ID code to access Internet-only Speed Tribe releases.

Previous alt-rock videos with car themes such as Ministry's "Jesus built my Hot Rod" and Rob Zombie's corny devil rod rock shorts. Rod Chong edited scenes to a precision never seen on music or auto TV to date using the latest in digital filmmaking technologies and special effects. A veritable symphony of high tech sounds with backing surround tracking rhythmic video pulsations to the soundtrack just add to the entire LeMans experience in a small package. kudos to Mediakill [DJ Bitter]

GEAR WHORES

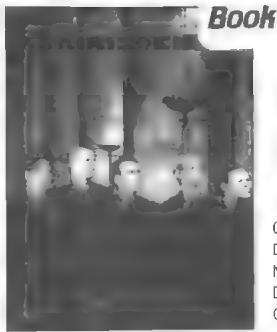
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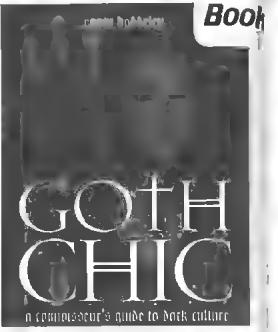
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U.S.



DVD



Contact:
MK Ultra Media Group
3023 N. Clark St. #365
Chicago, IL 60657
U.S.



Temporary Spaces

Photographs by Martin Eberl Quotes Temporary Spaces is edited by Heinrich Dubel and has a forward by Ever Backward Never. Temporary Spaces is about the reality of the club scene that, without the musicians, people, fashion and fun, you don't have anything but Temporary Spaces. Martin Eberle takes you through the magical wonderland of Berlin's club scene and shows you the "hot spots" as they really were. Empty, trashy, hole in the walls, that turns into an enchanted kingdom when the sun goes down.. One of my favorite clubs that Eberle talks about is the Club 4 Chunk. An angled one story brick building with an expansive cellar. It was a former building yard and materials storage depot. One fellow clubber said about Club 4 Chunk, "You'll only leave this drunk and disheveled." Now that's what I call a good time. Filming and being a part of the club scene for over ten years has given Eberle a unique vision of the crazed nightlife. I am convinced he has seen it all. Through his astonishing photographs and random quotes from the "party people" themselves, you can see why these where the finest places in the world to get "pissed out of your head." [jenbug]

Rammstein

By Gert Hof Rammstein is a work of art comprised of various artistic genres: music, theatre, pyrotechnics, and lighting. Throughout Gert Hof's 160 pages of astonishing photograph's of Rammstein you begin to understand little parts of Till, Paul, Olli, Richard, Schneider and Flake. Apart from each other they have parents and children and they all have many different hobbies and ideas. When these men come together as one unit they ARE a stick of dynamite.

Having known the boys of Rammstein for more than six years, Gert Hof is able to put Rammstein's stunning live performances into still photos. Only Hof, a brilliant man, could possibly portray them as the fire and light that their music puts off. Anyone who has ever been to a Rammstein show knows that with each song they perform comes a colossal explosion. Some kind of stunt that makes your mouth drop and all you can say is "dayuuuum!"

This is also how I felt as I was taking my sweet time looking at every little detail in this book. Honestly you will not want to set it down. I was absolutely stunned. After seeing there live show I was sure that nothing could top that. This book not only gives you some live footage but it takes you through Rammstein's "fantasy world." It's not all "pretty" but it is definitely pleasing to the eye. I would definitely recommend this book not only to the hardcore Rammstein fans, but also to anyone that just likes a great work of art. Or if you just like a little bit of FIRE under your ass. [jenbug]

Goth Chic

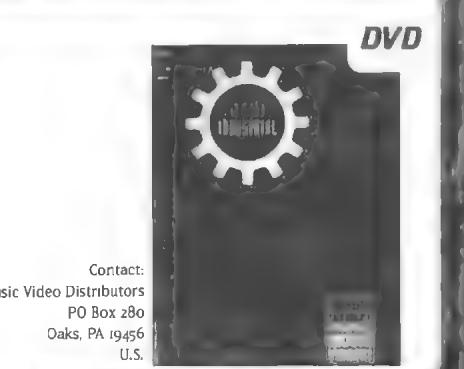
A Connoisseur's Guide to Dark Culture by Gavin Baddeley I love reference books devoted to Dark Culture, Death Rock, even "Goth"- if you will. All sorts of little tidbits of creepy info to expand my already dark and corrupted mind. I feel I myself am somewhat of a "connoisseur" of all dark things in this world, yet I still learned lots of useless, gothy information I can now store in my brain while I wait for Death Rock Trivial Pursuit to come out. (WOW! That would be cool!) "Goth Chic" is an extremely well written and informative novel-style guide to everything sinister. Starting with the "real" Goths, the Germanic Barbaric Tribe from the Dark Ages this detailed book goes on to the Marquis De Sade, Max Schreck, Theda Bara, Bela Lugosi, Miriam, and MY favorite vampire Gary Oldman (he can bite my neck any night!). Edgar Allan Poe, Vincent Price (he will always be the best), Elvira, Beetlejuice, Buffy, Lenore. Don't forget THE MUSICI Velvet Underground, Jim Morrison, Ian Curtis, Siouxsie, Bauhaus, Jonny Slut, etc. Plus all those nipple piercings and corsets. It's all in here. The topics and info is endless. Which then makes me pose Gavin's first question as well as mine. What IS Goth? Do you really even know? Because it really is way more than cheesy eyeliner twirls, long black skirts, pretentiousness and pretending that by dancing to electro/industrial at a some nightclub means you really are Goth. It is a CULTURE. It is a way of life. And let's not ever, EVER mention this "Goth" word again. hahahaha! [Lisa Swiss]

KMFDM - Beat by Beat

Beat-by-Beat is the 3-hour DVD collection of KMFDM live performances, music videos and live footage. Included are live bootlegs from the "Money" and "Beat by Beat" tours from Chicago, Palo Alto, and Dallas. Considering that the live performance footage is "bootleg" the quality is really rather good, making you feel as though you are actually among the crowd, screaming along. Backstage commentary from band members, roadies, and stagehands makes for entertaining intermissions between the classic Brute0 inspired videos. As well as giving you an intimate look at KMFDM's life on tour. The previously unreleased "Zip" video as well as the rarely seen "Megalomaniac" video (that was previously only available as a video single) are also included and make for a excellent added bonus for all those die hard KMFDM fans that have wondered where they could find this material. Bottom line, this DVD makes the perfect KMFDM video library. A must have for true KMFDM fans and well worth the money for the more casual fan. [vnwrn]

Gothic Industrial Madness

Wow! This video collection has everyone on it! It contains material compiled from the 3 VHS' Industrial Revolution 1 and 2, and Gothic Industrial Alternative Videos. Bands on here range from old industrial heroes like Foetus, Penal Colony, Throbbing Gristle, Clock DVA, Psychic TV, and Einsturzende Neubauten to newer industrial acts like Leather Strip, Spahn Ranch, Pigface, and Killswitch...Klick. Also included are Christian Death, Mephisto Walz, Rosetta Stone, Big Electric Cat.... The list goes on and the amount of bands on here alone is worth buying it. [Lisa Swiss]



Retro AS-1 Analog Synthesizer

Ok, so before I even begin to review this piece of software I guess I should state that I have been using Retro for years now. Not only is Retro something that I DID NOT immediately uninstall from my computer, but it has become one of those elite pieces of software that I now consider essential for producing any genre of electronic music on a PC. Retro is arguably the most complete and tweakable virtual analog synth on the market. It is exactly what it claims to be: a studio quality, fully programmable, multi-timbral, polyphonic synthesizer.

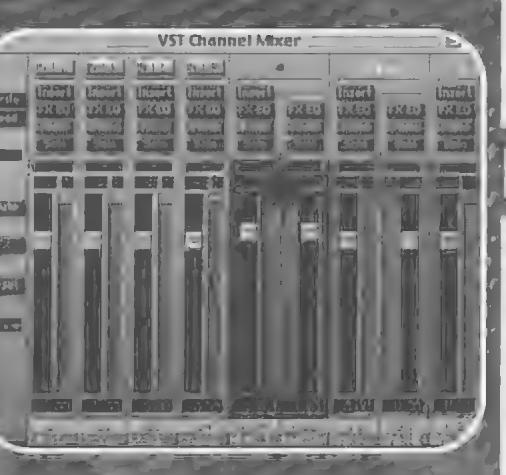
Right off the bat you should know that Retro has NO kind of onboard sequencer and is meant to function strictly as a sound module. It can be set up to work with external gear, Cubase, Logic, Performer, Cakewalk, and Pro Tools. External control works well and although Retro seems to run smoothly with VST programs, I couldn't get Cakewalk and Retro to work together well enough to be useful (and if Internet chat is any indicator, neither could anyone else!).

Depending on what you want to do, you can open Retro in 3 different modes. 'Keyboard' mode sets up an on-screen virtual keyboard complete with pitch and mod wheels. Here you can scroll through and play around with all 1,548(!) preset tones using either your mouse or your external MIDI device. I especially love this mode for its super-useful 'chord-maker' feature. 'Mixer' mode sets up a virtual studio mixer where you can assign 16 individual channels of incoming MIDI to 16 individual Retro tones. This mode can give new life to an old groove box or sequencer (example: sending all sequencer tracks off of a boring old MC303 to trigger their own tones on Retro). And last but not least is 'Editor' mode. This is the mode where you can create and edit tones. There is an INSANE amount of parameters and controls to tweak here. 'Editor' mode has 5 different screens:

Configuration-with a map of the tone using icons and arrows to show how the sound flows, 'Main'-shows you your 3 oscillators, 2 filters, and ring mod controls, 'Modulation'-you can route and edit all modulators including Retro's MIDI syncable LFO's, 'Effects'-2 Insertable effects and 2 global effects with extensive editing control including MIDI syncable delay, 'Global'-general controls including portamento, pitch bend range, and pan. The editor has so much control that a beginner user would probably rather slit his wrists than wrestle with the learning curve. On the other hand, an experienced sound designer will find no end to the vast tweakability here. [Seth]

Nosferatu

One of the best and most influential horror movies of all times, Nosferatu creeped out audiences everywhere back in 1922. Max Schreck was brilliant as Count Orlock-the scariest vampire to date in my opinion. Now an updated version of this silent movie is available with an added music score containing many Cleopatra Gothic/Industrial bands such as Rozz Williams and Electric Hellfire Club. The new soundtrack is definitely a plus to this film, making it spookier than ever. Ooooo, spooky. [Lisa Swiss]



Retro AS-1 - Analog Synthesizer

A few features and two other settings modes make up the rest of Retro. 'MIDI Processor' mode includes a MIDI syncable arpeggiator, split/layer controls, and a section for saving these different set-ups. All other general MIDI and audio settings can be accessed in 'Control Panel' mode. Finally, for recording to WAV or AIFF, Retro comes with its own built-in sound recorder.

All in all Retro is awesomely huge, almost too huge, in fact if Retro has any drawbacks they're probably due to the program's huge-ness. If you don't know what you're doing you're lost. If you DO know what you're doing then Retro is the virtual analog synth you've been waiting for. [Seth]

Goth Box

Although this came out on VHS years ago, Cleopatra decided to join the future of videos and make it available on DVD. Being an old Death Rock junkie, this video collection is pretty amazing. It's great to see infamous Death Rock bands like Red Lorry/ Yellow Lorry, Skeletal Family, The Chameleons U.K., and Lords of the New Church doing select live sets. One highlight is the video of Christian Death doing Romeo's Distress. Although it was a later performance Rozz did when he reunited with the original members, Rozz is still Rozz and he puts on a great performance. (RIP, Rozz!) There are some good later Death Rock acts on here as well, such as Usherhouse, The Wake, Nosferatu, and Switchblade Symphony (cute video!). This also features some extra bonus audio tracks from Die Form, Corpus Delecti, Mephisto Walz, Christian Death, and more. Collectable! [Lisa Swiss]

MK Ultra

MK Ultra is by and large, an unacceptable magazine. It gives off the air of being 'too big for its britches'. The five-page cover letter that accompanied the magazine was filled with pretentious babble. Alex Zander, the editor, speaks at great, boring length regarding his various experiences with the music industry. Spectre Magazine says, "MK Ultra is fast becoming the guide to dark underground music with an alternative/gothic feel. MK Ultra also labels itself as "the darkest rock n roll publication in the world." They interview bands such as Garbage, Rob Zombie, Cradle of Filth, and Nashville Pussy. Hmm, that's odd. I never really considered any of those bands "gothic". They are alternative at best, and Pop at worst. Now, to be fair, it does have a few redeeming qualities. Namely the KMFDM interview. I also found the "Going Green; Inside the Green Party" an interesting read. Unfortunately, these few decent articles are not enough to atone for the other multiple sins. The "Ultravixxxen" centerfold is a woman who goes by 'RedVamp'. Her wardrobe is unoriginal, and she screams, "I used to be a metal chick, but then I heard KMFDM and now I'm so totally industrial/goth!" The whole magazine screams of it, actually. However, if you like alternative and metal, then this would be a good publication for you. While the music may not remotely be to my taste, the coverage was fairly in-depth, and I would assume, should you enjoy such music, interesting. [MalignantFemale]

IN: We've only heard a little about the Wet & Hard genre in the States. Can you tell us a little about it?

Dalek: Wet & Hard is club music you can fuck to, at home, in the car, or on the dancefloor. It's really the sound for a new generation of clubbers. It is for those want to live with an open-minded lifestyle. It's about individuality and being open about sexuality, tolerance, freedom of thought, and the eradication of archaic and restricting double standards. Musically, Wet & Hard has evolved from the ruins of trance and techno in the 90's and you could find parallels in there somewhere if you wanted to

Never have the words sex, drugs, and dance music been truer than when it comes to Corvin Dalek. The Hungarian-born, Berlin-based DJ and producer creates and mixes cuts for dance clubs where stimulants, fetishes, and unbridled libido are just as prevalent as dirty beats and a packed dancefloor. A progenitor of a musical style termed "Wet & Hard," which purports to be a sex- and porn-fueled mix of trance and house music, Dalek has swiftly made a name for himself across Europe and in places as far flung as China and Australia. Releasing records on Flesh, a subsidiary of German trance behemoth MFS, Dalek has built up an entire scene devoted to the Wet & Hard concept, something that is more of a lifestyle than simply a musical genre. Dalek took a few minutes from his massive DJ schedule to inform IN that the future will most definitely be Wet & Hard.

IN: Where did the term Wet & Hard come from?

Dalek: Mark Reeder and I were sitting stoned in a sweet street cafe in Pardubice in the Czech Republic flicking through some porn magazines (which were on display to read in the cafe, amongst normal magazines – the Czechs are very open minded!) and we were talking about a term to describe my particular style of "crazy-funy-funy-groovy-pumping-thrusting-technoid-clubsound." When I walked a gorgeous leggy waitress, dressed in a very tight-fitting black cat-suit and high boots. She just put her little French maid's apron over the top of it and we both became very ... agitated. Jokingly, Mark whispered over to me (as if talking to her). "Hey are you wet? Cos I'm hard!" and I said that'd be a great name for my style of music – Wet & Hard.

IN: Aside from this genre, what are some other types of music you mix/produce?

Dalek: To be honest, at the moment no other club music is as interesting for me as Wet & Hard. It is free of all definition as there are no boundaries or guidelines to it and therefore it is multi-faceted. Naturally, I buy records from other artists, as they inspire me. But in my sets I try and play mainly very sexual records, ones that I think define, for me, the ethic of Wet & Hard (Richard F's "Cookie Dough Dynamo" is a good example of one of my favorites). This is regardless if those (who consider themselves to be musically superior) still try and categorize them as tech-house, tech-trance, groovy-techno, epic-house, "TV"-trance ... or whatever.

IN: Tell us about Flesh, the label you're involved with.

Dalek: Flesh was created especially for Wet & Hard as a new platform for this sound. It was originally a sub-label of MFS, but now it's an established label in its own right. Mark Reeder wanted to distance the Wet & Hard style from the MFS label because, for some, MFS still has the image of being a trance label – although MFS doesn't release so many so called "trance" records anymore – and he didn't want to cause confusion. The label has other Wet & Hard artists like Michael Burian, Jan Kessler, Eiven Major, Martin Polansky, Joseph Armani and we have released some singles we considered fall into the Wet & Hard category, such as Darren Christian's "Uni-fiktion." Some similar Wet & Hard tracks can be found on my mix compilation Hotkunst.

IN: What is Pornoground?

Dalek: Pornoground is really a name for the scene of Berlin clubs like Kit Kat and XS. Pornoground is vastly beyond the idea of the fetish club. These are no-holds-barred clubs where literally anything goes. But these are not smelly swinger clubs! There are no age limits naturally, but these clubs are like any normal club, where the music is Wet & Hard and sexually stimulating and the decoration and ambience is very creative and highly impressive. Young people dance, like anywhere else, the only difference is that there are no double standards to restrict you to experiment with your sexuality. Usually you go to a club to meet someone (in the distant hope that you can eventually have sex with them). It just so happens that in the Pornoground type of club, you can – and no one cares. You can be yourself.

IN: How did you get into mixing?

Dalek: I wanted to have drugs and sex, combined with music.

IN: What is the longest set you have played and where was it?

Dalek: The longest set was with twelve turntables at the Berlin

Atonal Festival. They placed them one after another in one big long line and I had to keep running from one side to the other to keep all the decks flowing at the same time!

IN: Who were some of your early influences as far as producers and DJs?

Dalek: I listen to all kinds of music. As a child, I was influenced by my brother's Pink Floyd records and Ennio Morricone, whose superla-

sion to move to Berlin in 1998 was a greater influence on my music, though. Berlin is a city that has found release. It is historical and ultra modern and very cool. It gave me a great inspirational impulse just being here. At this time, I was still making music that was influenced by trance and techno and so I went to the label that really started it all, MFS, to make my first single. Sure, this style of music had impressed me and influenced my DJing. It had been a reflection for my lifestyle at that time, but after my arrival in Berlin I could see that it was no longer a true representation of how I really felt inside.

The trance sound had become boring, repetitive, and very predictable. Mark convinced me to do my own thing and put my open-minded Hungarian background into my music and through this I was able to discover myself and nurture my artistic potential.

IN: As a DJ you obviously travel a lot, what were some of your favorite places to visit?

Dalek: Thailand is my image of paradise, as is South America, especially Colombia (but not for the obvious reasons). The people are so friendly and open-minded there. They feel the rhythm of my music; they can shake their hips to the groove. The same goes for the Romanians ... and then there's the Czech Republic, where they have very beautiful people, and Scotland, who really under-

stand what I do, too. They are mad for it and I love them

IN: Speaking of fans and audiences, what, in your opinion, are some of the best audiences?

Dalek: Impossible to answer this, so see the previous answer! I have fans from all over the world, from Australia to the US from China to the UK. I haven't been everywhere yet so I can't really answer this question. Besides, I really hate to have to make a comparison between the best this or that, how do you measure the best? I do my best to make sure that the people have an unforgettable time. I have had great gigs and unbelievable experiences. I only hope that those who were there also did.

IN: What are some of your favorite tracks to listen to? And, currently, what is your favorite track to mix?

Dalek: I listened to the more progressive and abstract sounds of Pink Floyd as a kid and I still occasionally listen to them today (but only their earlier albums), but I listen to all kinds of music, not just one style and not just club music. I listen to music to relax to, like Goldfrapp, Air, Depeche Mode or film music, too, or early synthesizer music ... or even Eminem. Currently (apart from Jan Kessler's "Psychoactive" and Eiven Major's "Cocksucca" tracks) my favorite, at the moment, is Bryan Zentz's "Joplin/Bushido."

IN: There are a lot of talented DJs out there. Who do you listen to and who do you like to see mix live?

Dalek: There are many DJs who I would really like to see, but I never get the chance. Sometimes you play at a festival at the same time as a DJ you'd like to see and you still don't get to see them DJ – this was the case with X-Press 2. I even shared a private airplane with some DJs I like, but our set times were simultaneous and I have yet to hear them. One person who I have shared many DJ experiences with though, and who I respect immensely is my friend and colleague Michael Burian. He was deservedly voted DJ of the year in the Czech Republic and has been promoting the fresh sound of Wet & Hard to the Czechs together with me. He is a wonderful person and a really excellent DJ, as most of the top DJs who have visited his country will attest. Recently, he has performed at London's Gallery and at Creamfields. I love playing with him as we really understand each other and we make a good team for a Wet & Hard evening. He has his own impressive style of Wet & Hard and he is definitely one to watch in the future. He has just finished a new track which will be his follow-up single, after the success of "Blow Me."

IN: What would you say is your greatest achievement?

Dalek: Apart from making a living from DJing? So far, playing on twelve decks.

IN: What are you working on right now?

Dalek: I have just moved into my new studio and so I am working on soldering cables together (not so exciting, eh?). Then I will start on a remix for Blank & Jones's new single – a track with vocals by Anne Clark (a highly acclaimed 80's cult poet). They want a very Wet & Hard remix from me.

IN: Do you feel the Wet & Hard genre gets a lot of negative attention?

Dalek: Unfortunately, Yes. But I really don't care, as this negative attitude comes from a minority of intolerant elitists who have forgotten the concept of entertainment. I don't make music for these people, as I have many fans worldwide who have immense fun playing with the concept of Wet & Hard. Sure, I get scorned by some of the older DJs who try and ridicule Wet & Hard, because they find it stupid, pornographic, and embarrassing. They simply can't relate to it (I suppose it might have something to do with age?) Maybe they can't accept that I am just doing my own thing. For example, look at Brian Eno and ambient music. When he made his first ambient albums under the title ambient it was the height of the punk era. He was the only one doing it in its own right and it has many followers. It is always so easy to copy what others have already done before you. The guidelines have been well defined for you to follow, a bit like painting by numbers, especially after over twelve years of techno and trance. It's much more difficult to do something different, as people are usually quite closed-minded and resilient to change. With Wet & Hard I simply want to present a fresh and alternative club sound and give it an individual identity, so that people don't have to use a thousand adjectives to try and describe it. It is as it says – Wet & Hard.

IN: Have you ever had a gig in the States?

Dalek: Not yet. I would like to, but I doubt that they'll allow me to play there once the find out what it is I play, as it seems from the reports I hear that the authorities are quite prude. Californian Wet & Hard DJ Pat was approached by the police while DJing and they threatened him with immediate arrest if he played any more Wet & Hard records. Total hypocrisy! In the country where the most porn films are produced you are not allowed to play records with fucking or sucking sounds (but it's alright if it's in a hip-hop record? and it's alright to have killing and guns – is sex so dangerous?) I feel sad for the people who are living in the US today who can't see what is happening all around them. Politically, Europe is distancing itself from the US because there is talk of war and this is a very sad situation. It is disturbing us all. Will anyone in the US be able to do anything about it without being branded a terrorist traitor? Under the veil of democracy the American people are being oppressed and blinded and into believing what their leaders are telling them. They have a new improved Secret Security Service and new laws to control the people on all levels. You can draw parallels, but what remains is, we have been down that road once before in Europe. Is it now America's turn?

IN: Where do you see Wet & Hard music going in the future?

Dalek: If the US authorities and the moral majority have anything to do with it – probably to prison.

IN: Any closing thoughts?

Dalek: Keep it Wet & Hard!

For more information on Corvin Dalek visit:
www.corvindalek.com



Corvin Dalek
Interview by Kaustik

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Recycle Your Ears is a new column for Industrialnation, manned by Nicolas Chevreux, the force behind the webzine by the same name (see <http://www.recycleyourears.com> for more details) and the man behind the Ad Noiseam record label. Recycle Your Ears, the webzine, is the preeminent source for news, reviews, and events on industrial music, with a decided focus on experimental forms such as dark ambient, powernoise, tekknoid, and more. Here, Nicolas has compiled reviews of his top music picks this year.

this one.

Lustmord – Zoetrope (Nextera)

It has long been known that "industrial" veteran and sound designer extraordinaire Lustmord had moved to Hollywood, working as a musician on movies. Zoetrope is the first of his release to be linked to these works, being a reworked version of the score written for a short movie based on Kafka's "In the Penal Colony." The trailer for this movie is actually available on the CD, and looks extremely interesting. Music-wise, Zoetrope takes some sonorities from Lustmord's Metavoid, but in a less track-oriented way. The sound, crystal-clear as always is electronic but extremely rich and deep. Heavy in the bass, the tracks build slowly, while shorter, more dynamic sound effects are used to add more tension to the soundtrack. I found myself listening to this CD louder and louder, reaching the limits of my speakers in the process. It is not really surprising, but Zoetrope proves once again that Lustmord is one of the "greats" out there. As good as Metavoid was, but maybe more accessible, here is a fantastic piece of music that I will keep close to my stereo for some time.

Do Make Say Think – & yet & yet (Constellation)

Neutral – Motion Of (Mad Monkey / Hymen)

Song writing and modern electronic music are usually two things that are not combined. The 2002 version of the electronic musician focusing on dance appeal or ear scorching, while lyrics are either absent or better off ignored. With her second album, Nicole Elmer (Neutral) turns her back to this approach. Here it comes again, her nice, sometimes relaxed, often angst-ridden voice, at the core of almost all the tracks of this album. Whereas one could be prepared for another of these albums where IDM melodies and beats tap the rhythm of the tracks, Nicole Elmer's lyrics and an acoustic guitar are the heart of Motion Of. Closer to Mad Monkey's experimental and steadily "fun" releases than to Hymen's industrial spheres, Neutral offers here moods that range from melancholia ("A Departure That Works") to pure pop song appeal ("Paper Boy"). Starting from the bleeps and noises of "..." and "Carbon", this CD contains very well crafted and rather original tones, this album isn't only what synthpop should really mean: it manages to be interesting and rich music-wise, and still to fit the vocals. Here is definitely a CD that is made to stay, and which shouldn't age too quickly.

Dryft – Mytotyc Exyt EP (Component Records)

Warning: If Cell, the debut by this Gridlock side-project, was a very interesting drum'n'bass album, here comes something that goes beyond and hits harder. First, the opening two tracks are pure bliss, mixing up-to-date rhythms, Middle-Eastern melodies and heavy but flowing beats on broken patterns. Still reminding of Gridlock for the emotional and mid-paced aspect, this album still incorporates some remnants of d'n'b influences, but get more hectic with the IDM-ish influences and MC on the title track. Finally, the melodies that were usually kept in the background with Gridlock get here in the forefront. The first remix, by Codec (the track listing on the sleeve is wrong), is an excellent version of the first track, that keeps the melody and the broken beats, but adds yet more catchiness. The Exclipsect remix is more dry and percussive, and the final remix by O2 adds more complexity to the original material. In my humble opinion, Mytotyc Exyt is the best material by any Gridlock member since Further. When the end of the year and the times of the "best releases of 2002" come, remind me to think of

Sonic Dragolgo – Don't Stop The Music (Klangkrieg)

Sonic Dragolgo is a one man act from Japan, and Don't Stop the Music seems his first album to be available in my side of the planet. Its cover is rather ugly, but its content, just as weird, has turned out to be a very addictive treat. Imagine some kind of noisy happy hardcore mounted on grunge guitars, vocoded Japanese voices, pop appeal, and a lot of musical talent on top of this. Don't Stop the Music is a roller-coast-

er, alternating fast and heavy passages with more accessible ones, and always coming in bright shiny packaging. As mad as it is, Don't Stop the Music makes you tap the rhythm and sing in the shower. Not afraid of looting the 80's (for example on "Sister"), this is a hard pop album, the thing that will make your little brother and your grandmother listen to gabber. Hard to describe, this album by Sonic Dragolgo reminds me slightly of Oghr's Welt album, for its combination of pop melodies and electronic extravaganza. But if Oghr were walking the nostalgia path, Sonic Dragolgo melts everything into structured yet energetic songs. On top of that, we even get a diverse album, with its slows ("Angela") and its fast gabber-meets-Japanese-disco stompers ("Don't Stop the Music"). One of its kind and tasty.

Ah Cama-Sotz – La Procesé de la Sangre (Hands Productions)

Since the Mantra MCD, the pillar of the noise scene that is Ah Cama-Sotz had taken a new direction, more rhythmic and energetic. La Procesé de la Sangre is the album with which this evolution blooms. The beats and structure are more mature, the whole thing is more balanced. The album, made of several alternating themes keeps on going from atmospheric tracks to more violent ones. The beat oriented tunes, constituting the core of this CD are fast building, and keep the beat steady. They are less noisy than one could expect, but have a good, almost bodily heaviness (and even some vocals). Obviously, this album is Ah Cama-Sotz's best produced material, with a lot more details, more varied and just working better as a whole. Already an essential act for his scene, this project signs here my favorite album from him. Ah Cama-Sotz has managed not to repeat himself, which is a minor tour de force and a very good thing.

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242) on his new project Male or Female, Hocico, Assemblage 23, Rhys Fulber (ex-Front Line Assembly/Delerium) on solo project Conjure One, Biotek, Covenant, Psyche, Alboforcen, Noisex, Informatik, Massiv in Mensch, Kompressor, Sulicide Commando, DJ? Acucrack, Alec Empire (Atari Teenage Riot), Severed Heads, Somatic Responses, Corvin Dalek along with tons of reviews and commentary.....\$4.00

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AiBoFoRcEn

Interview by
SARIN

IN: What is the preferred or proper way to spell Aiboforcen? I've seen Aiboforcen or !AiBoFoRcEn-, and I'm not sure if there are any others. And what does the name mean? I see it's Necrophobia in reverse, but would you tell us about how it came about, what meaning it originally had, as well as any it has taken on?

Seba: Well, we indeed started using it with the exclamation mark (stating: beware!!!) and the dot at the end indicating you had to read backwards. We also played with small and capital letters in reference to a GRUMH..., the only industrial band hailing from the same place in Belgium. With the return of Aiboforcen on our 3rd album, we decided to keep Aiboforcen as a one-word and forget about all the past details, only our true and initial fans knew about. Aesthetically, it was also much easier to use on a cd sleeve!!! Why that name... hmm... the initial concept was centred around the fear of death, and we noticed that when spelling "necrophobia" backwards and giving it a plausible pronunciation sounded interesting and confusing. Many thought it was referring to the "forces of aib" or whatever. And we were also damned sure no other band would be using the same name (laugh)!! And a quick anecdote, we now have in our studio a poster of Sony's Aibo™ robot... We love it!!!

IN: I heard a rumor Sons Palliatifs, your newest album, existed just before Khazad-Dum collapsed, and either appeared in very limited runs or was about to appear (it was all rumor). Could you comment on that?

Seba: This is not true. Just after the release of Face (of) Death, Anne-Laure H. (who cared for female vocals back then) and I parted. We had then also broken our deal with Celtic Circle Prod. with the intention to release the 3rd album elsewhere. They could still put out the "Dying Rose" single with a bunch of remixes we had and our video for the song. Then the label collapsed without releasing it and we were never paid for the two releases there and all the rest. All of this discouraged us a bit working further and we put the project on freeze and stopped writing new Aiboforcen material. At that time only "Shepherd's Deathline" had been written for the next album plus 2 other tracks (we eventually totally dropped). I then worked on the INTERNAL project together with John N. Sellekaers and our album was released by Zoth Ommog. That album gave us the trigger to work again on Aiboforcen after a certain break.

IN: Why the delay between Face (of) Death and Sons Palliatifs? I know bits and pieces of the story - i.e., a lot has happened to the labels and bandmates in that time - but can you tell me about it yourselves to clear up any rumors I might have heard.

Seba: Like I just said, we had the departure of Anne-Laure plus the trouble with Celtic Circle. Then, having decided to work again together, we also thought we needed to bring in new personalities into the project and recruited our friends Laurence and Thomas. But working with 4 people when we were used to studio sessions with the 2 of us was not always easy. So the writing and recording process of Sons Palliatifs was quite long as well. Then came the neverending moment to shop around for a label. After having wasted our time with a couple of labels, we were to release it on Zoth Ommog. We even had a recording session of the album with Talla's producer Vernon B. in the

Music Research studio's. But this material was rerecorded and self-produced by ourselves later when we decided to do everything on our own and launch the Alfa Matrix label. All in all, we now see it as a learning process which allowed us to upgrade our own studio and becoming totally independent in all we do. And this was the best choice. It was long for the fans, and we are very happy that after so many years they were still there to welcome our Sons Palliatifs album.

IN: Why the change in line up?

Seba: Female vocals are definitely part of Aiboforcen for us, so Anne-Laure needed to be replaced. Laurence H. accepted lending her voice to Sons Palliatifs on which we also had our long time friend Patrice Synthea who had already sung "Ghost Of My Life" with us on Face (of) Death and sang "Freezing Dreams" on the 3rd album. It was so great working again with her for Sons Palliatifs that we offered her to join the band for the more melodic dance tunes of Aiboforcen. That's why you find her again on our current single (available on Square Matrix 001) on two tracks. Meanwhile Laurence and Thomas have nowadays less and less time for the band so Aiboforcen is today more or less reduced to the initial duo: Benoit & Séba. Patrice will sing a bunch of tracks on the next "Kafarnaüm" album, but we also count on having a few other female vocalists. We already have made some very interesting recording sessions, but we prefer to reveal the details later if you don't mind. But we want the new album to also have its darker moments in contrast to the more poppy tunes featuring Patrice as lead female singer.

IN: I've heard you mention a theme of death between the three major Aiboforcen releases (i.e., Elixir Lytique, Face (of) Death, and Sons Palliatifs). Could you explain it, including how each album fits in the whole?

Seba: To put it in a nutshell, Elixir Lytique (lethal elixir) displays us in the position of fear of death. On Face (of) Death, we dare to approach the Black Queen, we dare to face her. In fact we accept death as it is. On Sons Palliatifs (palliative sounds) we close the trilogy by summarising the two previous chapters, and it brings us to the other side. Those who know the hidden track on our 3rd album realize that Aiboforcen did survive, while our machines passed away. We enter a new life, a new process, and a new musical approach. And I insist, the songs featured on our current single are definitely NO hints of what the new album will be. We wanted a clubby single, so we made dancefloor poppy tracks with the typical Aiboforcen sounds. No more. The next album "Kafarnaüm" is dedicated to organised chaos, so the music will most probably turn out much more tortured and complex this time.

IN: How do you pick the people to remix your material? And do you have some favorite remixes?

Seba: Our concept has always been the following: new artists can definitely make better remixes than bigger names. So each time we both admire a newcomer band that we get on pretty well with, we try to fix a remix with them. That way we had remixes from bands like VNV Nation, Icon Of Coil, Negative Format, Assemblage 23, Flesh Field before they were really known!!! Which is lots of fun of course! Sometimes bands offer to remix us as well.... Friendship and good music is the keyword in our selection. Any remix we released, means that we liked it!

IN: I also know you remix other artists. Tell me about what goes into an Aiboforcen remix?

Seba: The essential point is that Benoit must feel the song he's bound to remix. There's no point making a remix because you have to! He must be touched by the song and feel a leak in the song where he could transform it into an Aiboforcen-type of tune. That's what we enjoyed doing recently for Regenerator, Hungry Lucy, Negative Format, and Clan Of Xymox. A remix needn't be a cover; it must add something new - if not, it's boring for the original artist. The best reflection of this is probably the very chaotic remix we did for Clan Of Xymox, while everyone expected us to make a catchy EBM tune of it.

IN: There is a photo of a live show in the Face (of) Death CD jacket. Tell me about Aiboforcen live and would you play in the U.S. if the right booking agent/promoter helped out (hint hint?). And do you have any tour plans currently (come to the U.S.)?

Seba: Well, Aiboforcen is above all a studio band. We performed in Europe for the first 2 records but were never really satisfied with our work. So we will not perform concerts until we are totally ready. But first there must be a real demand for it. We of course got offers from various countries when Sons Palliatifs was released, but we had to decline them all. Working with various guest singers makes it also a bit more difficult for us of course! But, Patrice being in California, just convince her to make an Aiboforcen tour and we'll take the road with her and would arrange something around that. But now priority goes to the new record we want to release in the second half of 2003, if all goes well, then we'll see!

IN: I've noticed there are many vocalists. How does this work in the studio? Do they collaborate on lyrics, or work independently? How is the theme for vocals in tracks picked?

Seba: It all depends on the vocalist of course. Until now, all lyrics were mine and guest vocalists joined us in the studio and sang the song. With our new single, we started experimenting and Patrice recorded her own vocals in her studio. She got basic lyrics from me and got inspired by them, edited them, rewrote them, and then recorded her voice the way she wanted it to sound! Then we took her voice and reconstructed the final song from there. She only sang on rough demo tracks, that way she

ranging from Marilyn Manson to Moby to Icon Of Coil or even Theatre Of Tragedy.

IN: The art and packaging is quite nice, especially on Sons Palliatifs. What messages or impressions do you hope fans will take away from it, if any? And what's with the rubber glove that came in the limited Sons Palliatifs (I ask kindly)?

Seba: We wanted it to represent the depressive state of the other side and mix it with the heavy atmospheres you find in hospital wards specializing in palliative care where patients are waiting for their day to come! Laurence H.'s husband, Jean-François Soyez is a photographer and he came up with all the photos we used, it was his concept, and we found it pretty excellent! He's really talented, and brilliantly interpreted his own perception of our music. As far as the rubber glove, well, such gloves are often used in palliative care hospitals, and they symbolised for us a sort of protection from Death! And it's a bit shocking as well...

IN: How did Aiboforcen first come together? Tell me about the early history.

Seba: Wow!!! Such a long time ago. Well, I was then managing the Belgian band Fuze Box Machine and we one day offered him to do a site-project together with my long time friend Benoit. After a few months of intensive work on his computer, Benoit felt enough confidence to pursue the project as a duo. He eventually even co-wrote the Fuze Box Machine album! Everything developed from there. After a bunch of compilation tracks, we got signed to Celtic Circle, who had reacted to our first demo tape, and signed us on the never released second demo that eventually mostly became our debut album Elixir Lytique.

IN: "Testing New Waters" is another fantastic dance track. Is this part of a forthcoming release? Or more generally, what new releases are in the works?

Seba: Alternative and darker versions of both new songs featured on our current single will most probably be featured on the next album Kafarnaüm. But it's still too early to say right now. 'Cause there's still a lot to do. Benoit wrote lots of new basic tracks, but he recently moved out and is busy re-installing the whole studio. After that we can enter the production phase, adding vocals, giving a structure to the songs, etc. Meanwhile he also had to remix "Testing New Waters" and "Give Me These Wings" for some compilation appearances like Cryonica Tanz 2 or Venusia XX part II

IN: I notice the key members of Aiboforcen are also the key people behind Alfa Matrix. Just out of curiosity, if the offer was right, would Aiboforcen ever consider signing to another label? Also what about licensing - will we ever see Aiboforcen on Metropolis, say?

Seba: Well, I first want to insist on the fact that Alfa Matrix is indeed Benoit and myself, but it's also a 3rd person: Bernard Van Isacker who also plays an essential role in the label. All decisions are taken by the 3 of us together. And Aiboforcen were signed to Alfa Matrix with a contract, just like any other band! So we have a worldwide deal for 2 more albums on Alfa Matrix. They have the right to license our material anywhere with our prior consent. So if any decent and convincing licensing offer would happen, there's no reason why it would be refused. But it needs to be a honest deal from people who believe in the music of the band and understand it, not only in its sales!!! When our deal will be over, we'll see what we'll do, but until now we see no reason of changing label. We have full control on all we do and like we often say: never better served than by yourself. But we are aware that Alfa Matrix is a small indie label, and that being on a good major might open new doors for us. Wait and see! But our sole intention in making music is having fun and writing music for ourselves and sharing it with people who enjoy what we do, no more

IN: Please share a story about Aiboforcen fans.

Seba: We keep them confidential and respect the privacy of our fans!! (laugh) But we love them all, and really enjoy receiving their comments and questions about our music and lyrics.



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KOMPRESSOR

By Kyronfive

Unashamedly low-tech, with gravelly vocals spouting some very peculiar lyrical themes, Kompressor has gone from a net-savvy in-joke to a full blown phenomenon.

One visit to the Kompressor website www.kompressormusic.com and you'll begin to see why. Frontman Andreas K, apparently German-born but Ohio-based, sports an unusual take on the English language (sentences are often devoted of words like 'the') and a Halloween mask in every photo. Download the MP3s and you'll get a taste of Kompressor logic. Interspersed between original songs with titles such as "We Must Destroy X-10," "You Get Salmonella," and "Brush Your Teeth" (a children's song) are the odd covers "Girl For Ipanema," "You Will Call Me Kompressor" (a cover of Paul Simon's "You Can Call Me Al") and "Kompressor Wants to Get With You" (a modified Beck cover). While Kompressor's bio purports that he uses "synth," "crush," "fear," and "death" as his four musical influences, it's apparent that a very deadpan sense of humor is probably the unspoken fifth.

Yet, despite the deadpan humor, Kompressor is earnestly bent on world domination. Since Kompressor's inception in 1997, Kompressor has released one demo, two full length records (*World Domination* and *Crush Television*, respectively) and a 2001 world domination commemorative T-shirt. In 2001, his popularity was large enough to warrant a mention in *Spin Magazine*, no small feat for a band that is self-released. In 2003, Kompressor plans to have a new album written and a tour may be in the works. Clearly, Kompressor gets closer to world domination with every step.

In an interview done this September, IN penetrated the mask of Kompressor frontman Andreas K and discovered the true meaning of Kompressor Might.

IN: Tell us a little about the man behind the mask. Just who is Kompressor? What does he desire?

Andreas K: The identity of Kompressor must be concealed from all people. Even in live show, we must cover ourselves with masks to prevent identification. If you spread knowledge against corporations and against government, these large things try to attack you and stop speech against them.

IN: What are Kompressor's predominant musical influences?

Andreas K: Music does not influence sound of Kompressor. Much music is played on radio, shown on television, which has no power. Even many electronic music artists have no power; the music is only samples and noise. Kompressor has background in machinery, things such as pile driver, concrete saw, bulldozer. These things influence music. Kompressor wishes to help the minds of people with ideas to break free from mass media, the music is to shape minds like these machines shape earth and construct new things from it.

IN: Define for us exactly what Kompressor's plan for world domination is.

Andreas K: Kompressor world domination is not for war, not for killing, not for government. Instead this is for all people to hear music and to know of alternate ideas not given to them by newspaper and television. Many good bands, industrial music bands, experimental music artists are not heard because those who control these things are not concerned with the happiness of people. They are concerned only with money, only with promoting artist with bad music that is paid well by major label.

Andreas K: This is most important meaning of this letter. In German language this letter is common, it is not so common in English.

IN: We know Kompressor does not dance, so what does he do in his free time?

Andreas K: Computer programming jobs are not common to find in the United States like they are three years ago. To acquire money, there is landscaping performed. Kompressor is skilled at this, if you need this service you find that we have precision and speed at landscaping.

IN: Does Kompressor mind the fact that there are Mercedes Benz cars all over the world with his band name emblazoned on them?

Andreas K: It is testament to Kompressor Might that even car companies wish to use this name. Kompressor is not known to radio and television consumers, but is enemy of large corporations, and many know of Kompressor. Once exposed to the strength of ideas and the power of Kompressor Music, many want to spread these ideas and give this power to others.

IN: Define for us exactly what Kompressor's plan for world domination is.

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Andreas K: This is most important meaning of this letter. In German language this letter is common, it is not so common in English.

people everywhere hear music that animates and music that changes their ideas, instead of same song every hour on radio, same video with same basketball jersey and same dancing women.

IN: Are there any plans for a Kompressor tour?

Andreas K: Kompressor tours extensively in 2001, we do not have funds to tour at this time, perhaps in 2003 this is possible. We thank all fans for supporting Kompressor and making live performance possible, we spread Kompressor Might to America and Europe in all parts, and people see this, and people enjoy this.

IN: Kompressor has written songs for children ("Brush Your Teeth," "Never Talk to Strangers") as well as educational songs ("Vitamins are Good," "Words"). Does Kompressor consider himself to be a positive influence on his listeners? What other lessons does Kompressor wish to impart on his fans?

Andreas K: The Kompressor Music is powerful, and enjoyed by all ages. There is no negative in music, only positive ideas.

Young people need to know as much as adults that radio and television are only trying to sell products, newspaper is only for advertisements, articles are only for political bias. These ideas are not good, if we give good music to people with good ideas, this is only positive thing for them. Faris, and all people also, should know that music that is only good to tolerate (mediocre) is not good enough to listen to. With everything that is made, thousands of artists across world recording good music, if you dig you find many good things. Looking below surface is what must be done. All innovation happens far



below the surface, and trickles up slowly from bottom. Instead of occasional bubble of inspiration, those who enjoy music must find music where it is being created, where new ideas are made, and take it from that place. Good music is better for living. For every one artist like Beck that comes to surface of major labels, there are one thousand other artists with baritone voice and modern rock guitar.

IN: Kompressor has chosen to cover both Beck and Paul Simon. I noticed you mentioned Beck earlier in the interview. As well, I noticed there is a photo of Kompressor on the website reading a Paul Simon book. What insight does the fact that Kompressor has covered both of these artists give us about Kompressor music?

Andreas K: Beck is artist who uses Brazilian, Spanish, American influence from many decades in music. The ideas are open and are a success. But it is not pasting samples like many artists do, Beck writes good songs using these ideas for making music rather than stealing samples and putting on records. Paul Simon is artist who is on major label, releases many albums, but still album *Graceland* has many good songs. Production makes songs suffer, major label tries to crush creativity, but still song "You Can Call Me Al" is very good. This coversong is popular in live show due not only for good songwriting, but for showing that industrial music makes this song powerful.

IN: What would Kompressor do if he was President of the United States?

Andreas K: This is complex job. Many think that president is only one making decisions, but those who make laws are all over country, all over Washington, all over New York and even not in United States. President changes some things, president has speeches, but president does not control entire nation. If Kompressor has control over laws, many things would not change, but corporations are closely watched instead. Music industry does not get power to stop consumers from listening to music. Radio stations are not owned all by one company, giving bland things to people instead of powerful music.

KOMPRESSOR DOES NOT DANCE

IN: What is the future of Kompressor?

Andreas K: We are in studio currently starting work on new album, perhaps there is tour in mid or late 2003, Kompressor Music will not stop working to animate people and stop mass media until these goals are complete.

For more information on Kompressor, including purchasing CDs, shirts, & stickers, or to find out more about Kompressor's landscaping services, please visit the official Kompressor website at:

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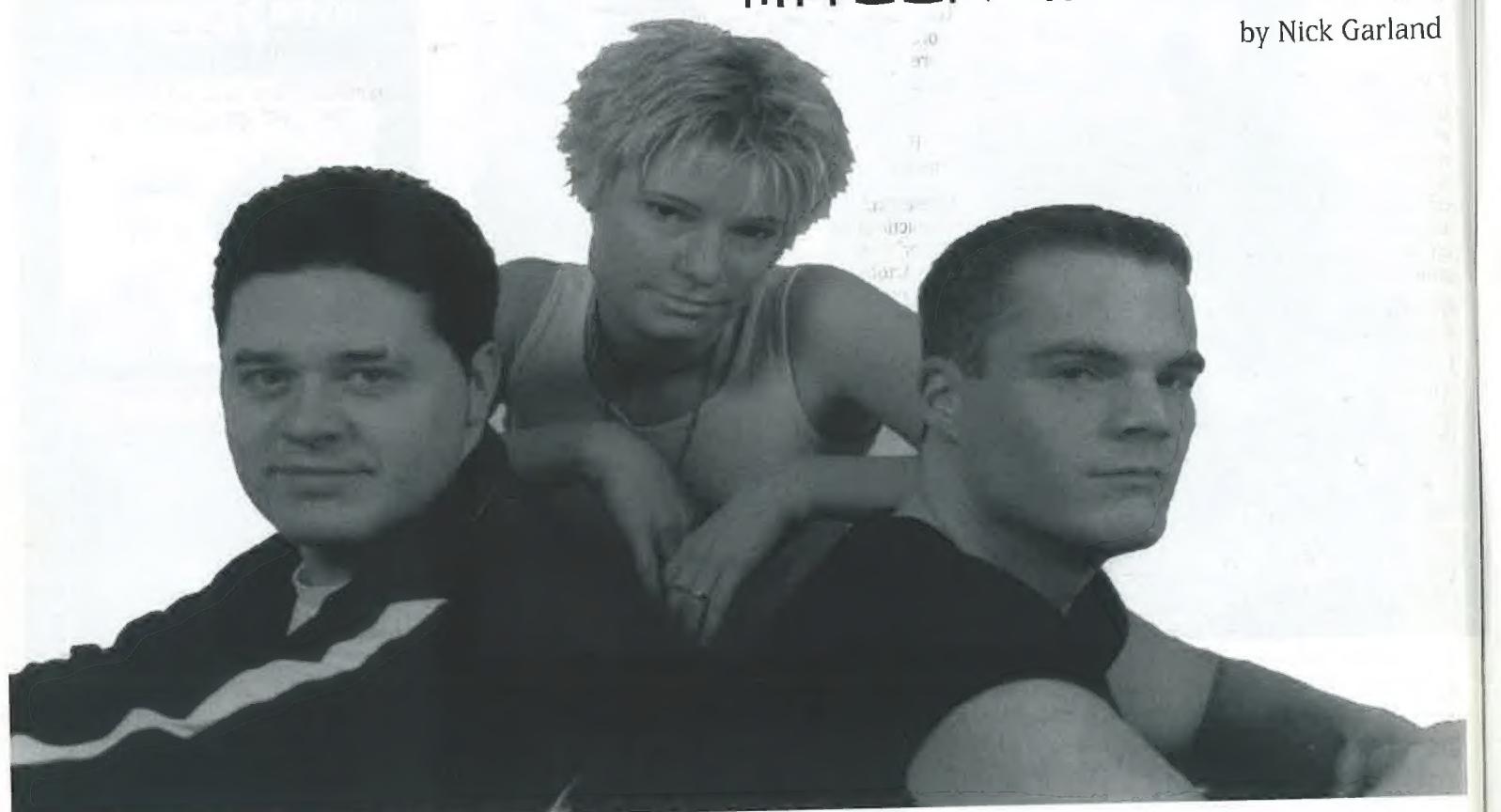
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an interview with Daniel Logemann of

MASSIV IN MENSCH

by Nick Garland

With two computers and a microphone, Daniel Logemann, Mirco Osterthun and Sarah Folkens mix sheer power, vocal bliss and intelligent lyricism into an amazing amalgamation of German musical wizardry. Standing at the forefront of a new breed of techno-inspired dark electronic music, Massiv in Mensch explore traditional EBM musical structures and chart new elektro territory with their newest release *Die Rein*.

Their domestic debut *Belastendes Material* is a hard-driving jaunt into industrial and EBM realms saturated with both beautiful femininity and growling teutonic masculinity. Not ones for musical stagnation, however, Massiv in Mensch decided to expand on their repertoire by stripping their old sound down but still keeping their beat-driven skeleton for their new album. Their self-described "dark rave" music is a perfect antidote for what they see as stagnant EBM and synthpop genres and marks a crucial point in both the evolution of their sound and in the evolution of the genres in general.

Massiv in Mensch jack-of-all-trades, Daniel Logemann, chats with Industrialnation about the new musical direction and their creative process.

IN: How did Massiv in Mensch form?

Logemann: Mirco and I founded Massiv in Mensch in 1993 but under a different name. We worked five years in our free time on electronic sounds and in different styles of electronic music like EBM, techno, trance, and goa. Then in 1998 we were searching for a female singer and some new influences so we changed our style radically and from now Massiv in Mensch sounds more song-oriented. Sure because of the female vocals from Sarah, which we know from our private environment, and furthermore because of the lyrics we combined with the music. The first product (after the DJ-promo) then was *Belastendes Material* in 2000.

IN: How does your early music compare to your current sound?

Logemann: Well, our sound now is more modern, cleaner and more dance/techno-oriented than the "old-school" EBM sound on our debut album. Sure, there are some things which are very similar on both albums, the beats for example, but our work now is more professional!

IN: What have been some of your biggest influences?

Logemann: On the one hand, sure, the great cynical German EBM heroes like Tommi Stumpff of Some More Crime and on the other hand some great actors and DJs inside the techno/trance and dance scenes.

IN: What does the name "Massiv in Mensch" mean?

Logemann: It means, "Massive inside the Human." It's more a play with words but it sounds very good and it symbolizes our main lyrical attitude, to describe decadence and the bad qualities of human.

IN: Why did you choose to perform all of your songs in German on *Belastendes Material*?

Logemann: We like the sound of the German language very much and it fits much more to the sound of this album.

IN: Who is Hans Gruber and what is the significance?

Logemann: "Hans Gruber" is a fictional name. We love the sound of this name. And it stands for typical German petty bourgeois and the schizophrenic character of these people.

IN: Did you create the name "Hans Gruber"?

Logemann: Yes, we created the name but sure there are thousands of "Hans Grubers" in Germany. But the name stands for the thing I mentioned.

IN: The spectacular vocals of *Belastendes Material* were absent on *Die Rein*. Why did you choose to accent the programming in *Die Rein*?

Logemann: Well the play with vocals on *Belastendes Material* was very cliché and sure very popular. But we always want to make something really new with the following product. That does not mean that we will never make something again but it should mean that our roots are instrumental, too. And sure we wanted to work with guest vocalists in the future too, because Mirco and I are not "real" singers, more hard-dis-

torted "speakers."

IN: Did you have a particular goal for *Die Rein*?

Logemann: The idea was to create a perfect, instrumental album with less vocals and more eye on the sounds and the structures of the songs. "Rein" means "clean" - clean from vocals and too many samples and so on.

IN: Where did you put together *Die Rein*? Do you have a home studio?

Logemann: We have two similar home studios... well, Mirco and I both have two systems on which we can concept the songs and take it to the other studio and go on with the work. That's really cool. We are very software concentrated, more computer than hardware like synths and so on. We've got a professional microphone and so on and the production is like in a huge studio with programs like Pro Tools.

IN: What does "Mein Erstes Bonbon," translate to in English and what does the song symbolize?

Logemann: It means "My First Drop" and the title fits to the sample which is in the song. The song is very naive and playful. The character of the song fits to the title and that was our intention.

IN: How did you get signed to Artoffact Records in North America?

Logemann: Artoffact licensed the debut CD from Wire Productions and released the album with a complete new artwork and two remixes. So we got in contact with York from Artoffact. We saw that there were very good basics to work with this label in the future, too. And so we decided to release *Die Rein* with Artoffact in North America and in Europe, too.

IN: Have you ever thought of releasing your music on vinyl?

Logemann: Yes, there were some considerations regarding our next project, the *Uturn* compilation. I think that

his very own part inside the song and that was really great!

IN: Why do you believe electronic music is a good means of expression for you?

Logemann: Because the sound of electronic music is more "perfect" and clean than rock or pop music. It fits more to our personal request and the strong and hard staccato vocals which we have used. Together it's really a good and perfect combination for us.

IN: What can we expect from you on the Artoffact *Uturn* compilation?

Logemann: Four brand new techno-oriented tracks in the style of *Die Rein* but in one case with really industrial elements, "Hass Kot." Furthermore, we've got a real kickin' remix from DJ Hellraver!

IN: What do you plan to do for your next album?

Logemann: Well we want to tour with the next album. We all hope to realize that in the next year! Well, it will be a really kickin' album. I will love it because it's the most precise and direct thing I have ever created... it's really dark rave. A techno album with sure EBM influences and the best of the two former albums will be represented on the disk. There will be more vocals on the album and we will work with guest musicians from other

"...it was really logical for us to release something totally new like '*Die Rein*', with absolute techno influences in it."

IN: You have placed a lot of vocal samples in your songs. Where do these come from?

Logemann: The samples are from movies or television reports, news and so on. We have sampled tapes for kids like "Masters of the Universe." [laughs] We always search for fitting samples but we have limited the sampling on

Die Rein as you can probably see! "*Belastendes Material*" has got much more samples in ninety percent of the songs. "Willst Du'n Bonbon?" means "Do you want a drop?" The sample is from Predator 2.

IN: From where do the themes in your lyrics come?

Logemann: As I already mentioned. The lyrics deal with decadence and bad attitudes of humanity. Our daily lives inspire us.

IN: Does American culture inspire your music?

Logemann: Not consciously or directly because we don't know the "scenes" very well. We always hear from the media but that's not very personal for us.

IN: What are some specific examples of experiences or events that have inspired you?

Logemann: Well I'm not able to pinpoint one event or one example. It's the history itself. Our musical change, our experiences with famous people of the scene, our contacts, our daily lives, personal experiences — everything can be a trigger to make something new in our music.

IN: How do you decide which songs get vocals and which don't?

Logemann: Well the decision comes when we hear the finished song. Then it's obvious if a song can get vocals or not. We have worked on electronic music since 1993 and so it's really inside us to know if a song is complete or not.

IN: Do you feel that using both female and male vocals gives some balance to your music?

Logemann: Sure. It's a good contrast and works very good to hear more facets of vocals in one song. On our debut we were able to assign every member of the band

this music is very suitable to release on vinyl. Especially in the German techno and dance scenes the DJs love to play the stuff from vinyl, more than from CD! So I think it could be a perfect option to release something really danceable in the future on vinyl, too.

IN: Why do you label your music 'dark rave'? Is it because you feel like you don't fit in any particular current genre?

Logemann: Yes, we are not EBM, we are sure not dark in the meaning of "dark wave" or "gothic." Our "dark" means more our kind of sarcastic humor. And "dark rave" sounds a lot like "dark wave" - so it's a genius play of words.

IN: Do you believe that the 'dark electronic' music genre is stagnating and why?

Logemann: Yes I think so because the scene is too dogmatic in my eyes. They are not able to get new influences. Here in Germany the dark electronic music concentrates now on soft futurepop like VNV Nation, Covenant, Apoptygma Berzerk and so on, then there is industrial pop like Suicide Commando or cliché electro like Terminal Choice. If there is a new band it's ninety percent likely that this band will make a sound which is one of the three, not individual. And so it was really logical for us to release something totally new like *Die Rein*, with absolute techno influences in it.

IN: Do European and American audiences respond differently to your music?

Logemann: Yes, the North American public is more enthusiastic and more open-minded than the European public! Unfortunately we haven't played in North America but the response and the feedback, reviews and so on are much better and enthusiastic than in Europe or especially Germany. The people are more open-minded for this kind of music!

IN: Why do you think that is the case?

Logemann: I think because of the perhaps seemingly strange character of German music or German lyrics, the sound of the voice and so on. It's more bizarre for Americans to listen to such stuff than here in Germany. Here it's all a bit conservative and the radio stations don't play Rammstein but they

German bands. The vocals are very different to those on *Belastendes Material* but Sarah sings as well. On one song I've got a robotic voice and on another song I'm a weird shouter.

IN: Is there anything you would like to add to the interview?

Logemann: Best wishes from Massiv in Mensch and thank you for your questions. Great to see that you are interested in us.



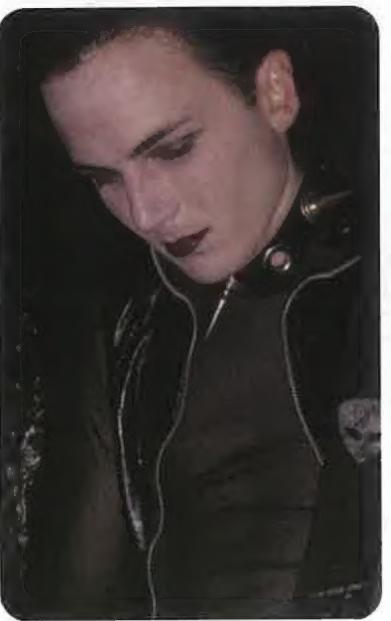
**October 24, 2002
Cleopatra Records
10th Anniversary Party
at the Key Club in
Hollywood, CA U.S.**

photos by Michael Achach

October 24th was a weekend of spooky Hollywood decadence for San Francisco IN staffers Lisa Swiss and Michael Achach, who were there to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Gothic/Industrial label Cleopatra Records. The party was held at the famous Hollywood venue, The Key Club; and headlining was the legendary 80s band, Sigue Sigue Sputnik, famous for their outrageous glam rock style. Opening night acts included Cleopatra recording artists Zeromancer, Switchblade Symphony, and Razed in Black. Many of Cleopatra's artists could be seen roaming around the venue to toast their label's success. The next night, Lisa and Michael set out for the 4 year anniversary of "Release the Bats," a monthly Death Rock club held at the Que Sera Bar in Long Beach. Element, an LA based Death Rock band that includes some of Release The Bat's DJs, played that night for all lucky bats to enjoy. Both nights supplied spooky royalty at its very best.



Shane, lead singer of Element, delivers cryptic messages @ Release the Bats.



Jeremy of Element & Ghastly Magazine @ Release the Bats.



Lisa Swiss of IN, Rommell of Razed in Black, & Bari-Bari of Mephisto Walz/Christian Death @ the Key Club.



SF DJ Rick A. Mortis, Vile, & friend @ Release the Bats.



Zeromancer Rocks the Crowd @ The Key Club.



Vile & Lisa Swiss of IN get cheeky @ Release the Bats.



Adrian of Blue Period & Deidra @ The Key Club.



Lisa Swiss of IN & Martin Degville of Sigue Sigue Sputnik @ Key Club.



Tony James of Sigue Sigue Sputnik & Alicia Alexander @ the Key Club.



Sharon of Diva Destruction & Michael Achach of IN @ Release the Bats.



Veronica O. & Jenn Bats looking cute & spooky @ Release the Bats.



21st Century boys Tony James and Martin Degville of Sigue Sigue Sputnik blow the crowd away at the Key Club.

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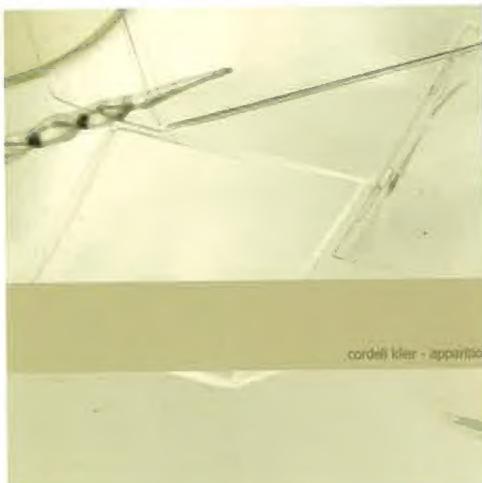
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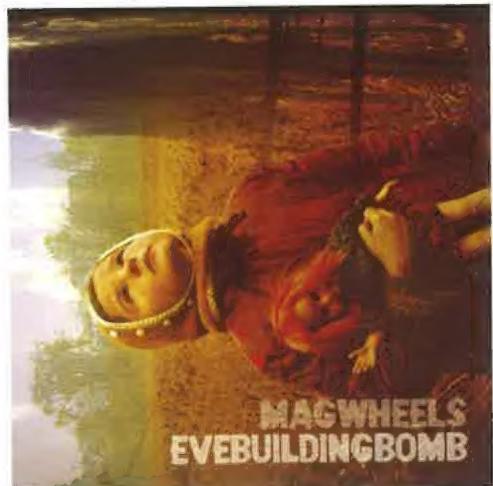
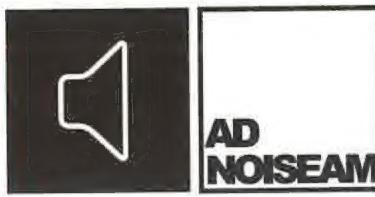
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